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WOMEN'S WEEKLY

DECEMBER 28, 1955

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The Australian WOMEN'S WEEKLY

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DECEMBER 28, 1955

Vol. 23, No. 31

OUR CHRISTMAS WISH TO YOU

MAY your Christmas be a happy one. May it hold for you the laughter of children, the shared love of family, and the companionship of friends.

This is our Christmas wish to you.

With admiration we wish it to the family groups—to the mothers working so hard, uncompaining in the eternal round of washing, cooking, and cleaning, unswerving in their devotion to their children and to the ideal that those children shall grow up free men and women in a free world.

With hope we wish it to the young people—the boys and girls fresh from school, with life before them and the enthusiasms and sincerities of youth shining in their bright eyes.

With gratitude we wish it to the old people—the men and women who have done so much to shape this country. Many of them are a little old and tired now, alone, perhaps, and sad in feeling themselves forgotten. To them we wish solace in happy memories and in the knowledge of work well done.

With welcoming friendship we extend our Christmas wish to the newcomers—the million people from other lands who are now Australians. To those of them still haunted by old, unhappy, far-off things we wish peace of mind and understanding, both from and of their new homeland.

And, most importantly, our wish goes out, with love, to children everywhere.

In them lie the hopes not only of this Christmas but of all Christmases to come. We wish for them the guidance and the will to know the eternal truth of the first Christmas message, to live by it and to transmit it to their children and their children's children so that there may truly come at last peace on earth and goodwill to men.

Our cover:

● The four angelic-looking choir boys are choristers at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney. Their names are (from left) Stephen Little, Terry Reilly, and Gary Brahe, with Robert Baker in front. The boys, aged from 12 to 15, are students at St. Andrew's Choir School and belong to one of the cathedral's two boys' choirs. At 7.30 on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Night the choirs will sing carols at the cathedral. Staff photographer Clive Thompson took the picture. The surrounding decorations were done by Jan Kieffer (Kick to his friends), a Dutch artist who came to Australia six years ago.

This week:

● Our special fiction issue this week has made past weeks busy for our artists, particularly Keith Dalglish, who illustrated "Thanks For a Miracle" and "One Big Happy Family." However, this hasn't stopped Keith from having his two pet lovebirds, Richard and Louie, properly prepared for Christmas. Most of his spare time has been spent teaching them appropriate phrases. Results, he reports, are good, and visitors to the Dalglishes are now greeted with joyous twitterings of "Merry Christmas."

● Seven of the historic churches on pages 22 and 23 were photographed by the Rev. George Rees, West Ryde, N.S.W. Miss Valerie Lhuette took the picture of the Hermannsburg Mission Church, and the one of Gostwyck Chapel was taken by Mr. T. G. Brown, of Armidale, N.S.W.

● Grandma Moses, one of whose paintings is reproduced on pages 28 and 29, maintains that anyone can paint. "All you have to do," she says, "is imagine a picture in your mind, then get busy with the brush." She has been doing just that with great success for the past 19 years—ever since her fingers got too stiff for needlework at the age of 76.

Next week:

● Feeding your family well without slaving in the kitchen all day yourself will be the theme of a special four-page cookery feature next week.

● Butterflies are gorgeous creatures and many of the most gorgeous among them are Australian. Next week we'll show you in two pages of color pictures some of the loveliest butterflies from Australia and the northern islands.

THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

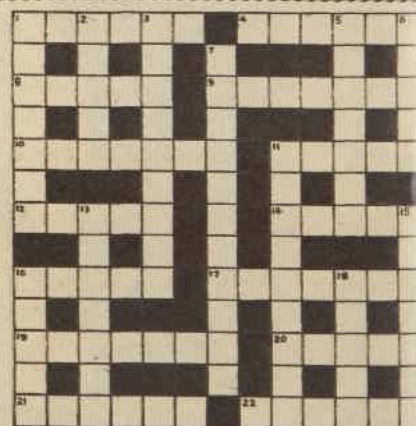
ACROSS

- Drink darling with a small piece of toast (6).
- It's dull but it could be firm if you take it without tea (6).
- Patuous to be found in a Newfoundlander (5).
- Misrepresent backward art to Mussoini (7).
- Crude in a persuader (7).
- Helps badly articulated wagers (5).
- Fifty among listeners are noble men (5).
- Father's half laughter for a Turkish officer (8).
- These are the main points (5).
- Eat next (Anagr. 7).
- Shakings while Rome turns in it (7).
- The gun city on the Ruhr (5).
- He often receives royalties (6).
- Refuge, the outside made of mineral and the inside could be sly (6).

Solution will be published next week.

LA CONIC HASTE
B V N P R O
CAMERA SHERDS
S R P Y N D
ELASTIC ABLE
C H E
LISTEN EXPORT
V I A
PART COCKTAIL
N R E T C
SHEETS OCELOT
O W T U R N
PERSE SPANISH

Solution of last week's crossword.



DOWN

- The 15 down of a self starter? (7).
- Outer garment with laid end (5).
- Malayan dagger distributed among six for drill (9).
- When you retire you may rest on them (7).
- Acts, one of them would be an act either way (5).
- Does this help to show a stiff front? (11).
- ABC, etc., ABC, etc. (9).
- Esteem concerning a bookie for a start (7).
- Tony and a man expressing the reverse of something else (7).
- Thuringian city where a famous almanac is produced (5).
- Used by painters, and the top of it is free from burden (5).



Thanks for a MIRACLE

MRS. CASEY, the butcher, said he would wait on Mrs. Daily himself. For years he had sold Mrs. Daily her Christmas turkey. Things were changed now, of course, but whatever she wanted, even if it was just a bit of sausage or a chop, he would take care of it.

Mrs. Pierson, swaddled in a great plaid coat, and talking shrilly about her twenty-two-pound bird, was waiting to see what Isabelle Daily was buying for her holiday dinner. Everyone in the little town knew that Isabelle had quietly refused all invitations, and for the life of them they didn't know why, being alone the way she was.

Mrs. Pierson thought that if she took off her mittens and rewrapped the scarf on her head it would give her time to hear the order. But there stood Mr. Casey, holding his shop door open for her as if he well knew what she was up to. Nothing to do but go, so she did, frowning a little as she went.

The butcher turned pleasantly to Mrs. Daily, now the only customer left. He tried to make his question sound light and natural: "Now, Mrs. Daily, what will it be?"

"A turkey, Mr. Casey. A real nice one." A quick smile flickered, to cover his surprise. "A turkey?"

He watched her eyes hop with some small inner excitement from one magnificent fowl to another, hanging in a row behind the counter. "How big a one will you want?"

"I don't know." "You've always had it figured to the tip of the wing. How many are coming?"

She laughed—a tiny, breathless laugh. "I don't know."

"Expecting some of your family from the East?"

"No." He waited for a moment, patiently. But she didn't go on.

"It's better not to count too close," he said. "Cold turkey is good eating, too. How many did you invite?"

"I haven't invited anybody at all." Pity welled up in Mr. Casey's heart. "You're cooking it just for yourself, then? I have some nice small ones. They're frozen, though."

"No, I shall want quite a big turkey. Fourteen pounds at least."

"You'll be eating off it until after New Year," Mr. Casey warned.

"No, they'll come." "But you just said you didn't invite anybody."

"I didn't." And she laughed right out loud at his astonishment.

He had known and liked Mrs. Daily for thirty-five years, maybe more—since she was in high school, anyway. Such a glowing girl. So much laughter in her. He had sold her parents the poultry and the hams for her wedding supper. He had sent the young couple the best steak in his place for the first dinner she had cooked in her own home. A present he had made them of it.

Now she was a widow, and he knew how hard she had taken her loss. Maybe too hard to bear.

He spoke to her in a low, gentle voice: "Are you sure you want to buy a turkey at all?"

"Quite sure. How much does that one weigh?" She pointed to one of the best.

"Too big. Sixteen pounds."

"I'll take it."

"Mrs. Daily..." She looked squarely at him. "You think I've gone mad, don't you? Well, believe

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It was a Christmas dinner that none of them would ever forget because it happened in such an unexpected way.

By FRANCES BERGMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY DALGLEISH

A SPRING Motif

by Frances Gray Patton



LIKE many very masculine men, Howard Cameron found the society of women refreshing. Their chatter had a tangential quality that loosed his mind from the tethers of grim reality; there was something debonair about the gravity with which they approached the prettier problems of life—the planning of a party, for example, or the selection of a frivolous, unnecessary hat—that made him feel protective and strong and determined to keep them contented.

So when court adjourned early on Thursday afternoon he declined an invitation to play golf with the presiding judge and hurried home with the notion of working in the garden with his wife.

The weather was just right for gardening and he expected to find her already outdoors, but the yard was deserted, and when he entered the house he guessed immediately that it was deserted, too. He went from one serene, airy room to another, calling his wife's name: "Julia! Oh, Julia!" But he didn't find her. There was only a faint odor of cologne in the air. Finally he said: "Isn't anybody home?" in a loud, somewhat injured tone, and went into his den.

The den was the sort of "man's room" that only a woman profoundly impressed with the difference between the sexes would have arranged for her husband. (Even the name by which it was designated—not library or study, but den—denoted feminine awe, Howard had often thought; for, by implication, the occupant of the den was a creature in whom the beast was not entirely tamed, a creature to be cajoled and fed raw meat and permitted to growl in peace.)

An engraving of a lordly stag hung over the fireplace; a tobacco jar, in the shape of a human skull, stood on the mantel. The books that lined

the walls were bound in sombre colors.

The red leather armchairs, the sofa and the large kneehole desk all sacrificed elegance of line to a ponderous solidity that seemed calculated to withstand a kind of wanton mistreatment that Howard, who was fastidious to a degree, would never subject them to.

There were times when he felt the room to be a fitting tribute to the pre-eminence of the male, but today it made him feel caged and lonesome. He went to the window, drew apart the monk-cloth curtains, and gazed out.

The scene outside was charming. Near the window, a big cherry tree was "hung with snow," just as Housman had said. (Howard was fond of the poets and always pleased to see proof of their accuracy.)

On the lawn a host of daffodils danced, for all the world as if they'd been reading Wordsworth, and, beyond them, across the road, a patch of woodland was gauzy with the foliage of early May. Up the road, homeward bound from school, came three half-grown neighborhood children.

Those children—the Camerons' own daughter, Mary Anne, her bosom friend, Miss Bitsy Blackburn, and a boy named Everett Jones, who looked like the bookish son of a professor, which indeed he was—were all at that age, fourteen, which is traditionally accepted as representing in the human life span the carefree, budding season of the year, but they gave little evidence of juice and joy.

They neither danced, like the daffodils, nor assumed, like the delicately brooding trees, an air of contemplative bliss. They climbed the hill with text-books held sloppily in the crooks of their arms (current fashion scorned such tidy devices as briefcases or buckled straps) and appeared to be intent upon personal problems which no fine weather could dissipate.

Everett Jones, a gangly boy, who wore horn-rimmed spectacles, and whose frame hadn't yet filled out enough to prevent his enormous feet and noble Roman nose from looking comical, was considerably in the lead. He walked with long, stiff strides, as if he were being pushed from behind by a steady wind. He

lifted his jaw at a defiant angle that suggested studied contempt for the opinion of society, his own rapid growth, and everything else that mortified him.

Observing Everett, Howard Cameron winced as if some old vulnerable spot of his own, still tender beneath the callous years, had been pressed. "The troubles of our proud and angry dust . . ." he quoted under his breath.

Far in Everett's wake, and, in comparison with the boy's speed, at a snail's pace, came the two girls. Bitsy Blackburn moved with the dogged slowness of one who must face a new morning with the irons of a discouraging dream dragging at her ankles; her magnificent shoulders sagged, and at intervals she stopped stock-still in the road, a statue of apathy, while Mary Anne—a girl half her size—talked to her, spreading out her hands in the pantomime of exhortation. Mary Anne had an air of being in command of any given situation, which her father often found vaguely disconcerting. At the moment, however, he was curious to know what she was saying—and to know what ailed Bitsy and what had stung Everett. He was in a mood for diversion.

Everett, glancing neither to left nor right, stalked by and disappeared over the brow of the hill. The two girls paused at the entrance to the Camerons' yard. Bitsy stared up the empty road. Her muscles went slack. She stood there with her mouth half open and her free arm dangling so that her hand had the effect of hanging down below her knee. A pencil, stuck loosely among her load of books, slid to the ground.

Mary Anne stooped and retrieved the pencil. She stooped correctly, as she'd been taught in dancing school to stoop for a handkerchief—not bending from the waist, but dropping gracefully to one knee—for seldom, even in the most remote and unlikely places, did she forget the possibility of a public.

Rising, she tapped Bitsy's shoulder and jerked her head towards the house. Her manner was brisk and bluff, like that of a man urging a friend who is down on his luck to come in and have a quick one and drown his troubles.

Bitsy raised her limp hand

slowly, as if through water, and made an indecisive gesture in the direction of her own house, whose white cupola was visible above the cedars on the Camerons' side yard. Mary Anne grasped her firmly by the elbow and steered her up the flagstone walk.

Howard Cameron watched them, fascinated. He had the sense of mixed empathy and detachment that he had experienced once, camping in the mountains, when he had walked to see a pair of heifer does, their flanks rosy with dawn, each lifting a forefoot and sniffing the air outside his tent. And, oddly enough, it was Bitsy, more than his own daughter, who compelled his imagination. For Mary Anne, young as she was, was a finished product.

Like a daffodil responding to the first overtures of spring, she had already blossomed, with no perceptible effort, into her predestined pattern, and it was only at rare moments—when she wanted extra pocket money or was stumped by a Latin construction—that her father presumed to consider her in need of his aid.

Bitsy's essential shape, on the other hand, was still as uncertain as the course of the season itself. Her tentative shoots of beauty were sporadic and almost painful, like flowers on a naked, thorny bough.

On her birth certificate, Bitsy's name appeared as Louise, but, before the inky footprint of that document had dried, her parents had given her the name she was never to lose. The elder Blackburns, built on the grand scale that results from a long line of well-fed ancestry, had been enchanted by the sheer littleness of the infant they had produced. Yearning over the miniature perfection of her ears, her nose, her toes, and her fingers, they had delved in their minds for a word to express all the exquisite tenderness that these miracles excited in them. Being not especially endowed with vocabulary they had come up with "Itsy Bit," which, with proud coos of delight, they had contracted into "Bitsy."

For a short time this nom d'amour hadn't seemed entirely inappropriate; Bitsy had started life as small and pink as most babies, and, dandled in her mother's arms, she

had suggested nothing bigger than a cabbage rose on to the bosom of a large, beautiful woman.

Before her first birthday, Bitsy had been muscled like the infant Hercules, who strangled a serpent in his cradle. At eight, she had been a giant child, clad in outsized smocks, she had towered above Lucetta, the dainty negro maid who had walked her to and from school.

At ten, by popular acclaim, she had been elected captain of the neighborhood baseball team. Now, at fourteen, she stood five feet ten in her bobby-sox and hung her head to minimise her height.

In silence, the two girls passed beneath the cherry tree. A few petals, snowing down, lighted on Bitsy's thick hair. As they reached the porch, Mary Anne spoke in a clear, encouraging voice. "Take it easy, Bits," she said. "Other women have lived through this. Just play it cool."

Howard Cameron chuckled—Mary Anne's airy sententiousness was always leaven to his spirits—but he burned to know what universal cross of womanhood Bitsy Blackburn bore. When he heard the girls thrump their books down on a table in the hall, he opened the door of his den. "Hello," he said, trying to keep his tone disarmingly casual, "I thought I heard human footsteps."



Everett, his face hideous with rage, had Bitsy by the hair, while she held her clenched fist up in the air.

"Hi, Daddy," said Mary Anne.
"Hello, Mr. Cameron," said Bitsy in a dull, uninflected voice. She added, from routine civility, "Nice day."
"Too nice to waste indoors," Howard said. "You girls worn out?"

"We're exhausted," Mary Anne replied promptly. She was evidently anxious to scotch the chance of being invited to embark upon some chore like pulling wild onions out of the grass. "Utterly exhausted."

"So am I," her father said amiably. "Come in and relax with me."

The girls looked uneasy. Their presence had been tolerated, but never courted, in Mr. Cameron's retreat.

"Why—thank you, sir," said Bitsy.

"Okay," said Mary Anne. She gave her father the sort of quick, bright-eyed glance that the fly in the nursery rhyme probably gave the cordial spider. As she allowed Bitsy to precede her across the threshold, she let an opaque expression, like a visor of moral resistance, drop over her face.

"I just want company," Howard said. "I don't want to improve your minds."

"Don't read 'em, either," Mary Anne said. She dimpled demurely to take the

edge off her impudence, but she continued to look suspicious. She plumped down upon the sofa, and began to examine her varnished fingernails.

Bitsy sat beside her. She lowered her body by degrees, as if she had learned from a succession of broken couch springs the value of physical caution.

Howard perched on the corner of his desk and lighted a cigarette. "How was school?" he inquired. As an opening gambit, the question had, at least, the virtue of familiarity.

"About as usual," Mary Anne said. "Miss Whitty's making us memorise the last part of MacArthur's speech, and Everett Jones put on this act in the cold-lunch line that got us all in stitches and made Junior Bailey suck chocolate milk up his nose. Everett said, 'Old teachers never die—and oh, lingo, the pity of it!'"

"Everett knows millions of literary quotations," Bitsy said. Her voice was sad and tender.

"I think Miss Whitty heard about it," Mary Anne continued.

"In activity period she told Everett he had an unfortunate attitude towards life."

"Miss Whitty has something there," said

Howard. "I saw him, not long ago, streaking up the road like a bat out of hell." He had chosen deliberately this somewhat rakish description of young Jones' progress. He waited to see what reaction it would produce in the girls.

"Ha, ha! You're a card, Daddy," said Mary Anne. "Hellbat Jones. That's a good name for him!" She glanced significantly at Bitsy.

"I was using a trite figure of speech," her father said quickly. "I trust you won't repeat it. It might hurt the boy's feelings."

"He has no more feelings than a slice of boiled ham," Mary Anne said. "But I won't repeat it because, as you say, profanity is trite."

Bitsy looked directly at her host. She had very fine eyes, he noticed—clear hazel in color, like autumn water in a birch grove. But the expression in them now was so bleak that it wrung her heart. "Everett was getting away from me, Mr. Cameron," she said. "He called me his social—his social—what was it, Mary Anne?"

"Nemesis," Mary Anne said. "Whatever that may be!"

"That's a singularly ungallant name to

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The Woman in the case

"Why am I involved in this matter?" Sherrard asked the serene Mrs. Tablet.

FOREIGN correspondents are rarely wealthy, and when Sherrard found himself booked to spend the next six months in the Near East, he decided to sublet his London flat.

The agents into whose hands he put the business rightly described it as a charming bijou residence, situated in Mayfair, and in no time at all Sherrard received a first inquiry, and a few days before he left was rather sulkily showing round a Mrs. Cecilia Tablet.

She arrived with absolute punctuality at ten o'clock in the morning. She liked Sherrard's flat very much, particularly the china and glass. In the bedroom she paused a moment. "You wouldn't mind if I put in my own?" said she. "Two, in fact; two single beds? I shall have a friend with me."

Sherrard paused in turn; this was when he really looked at her. Though he was a broad-minded man, he didn't quite relish the idea of his flat being used as a love-nest.

There had been no mention of a husband and, moreover, Mrs. Tablet's use of her own first name—Mrs. Cecilia Tablet—suggested either widowhood or a divorce.

But when he looked at her he was reassured; widow, not divorcee, he felt—and in this was perfectly right—and no lovers.

She was, he judged, no more than thirty or so, but with an indefinable air of being on the shelf. She was well, but simply, dressed.

It surprised him to observe that she was also beautiful; he hadn't noticed it. Mrs. Tablet's profile was correct and exquisite, her skin admirably clear, her eyes a candid blue.

Sherrard felt that he would be safe enough; and, the next moment, she finally reassured him.

"For my companion," she explained. "I mean, the other bed. For Miss Brown, who lives with me. It's only fair to tell you."

Sherrard was pleased. He felt that two women, a widow and her companion, would look after his flat.

Mrs. Bates, his charwoman, at that moment entering, he bade her take Mrs. Tablet round the kitchen again. He had already explained that Mrs. Bates went with the flat; it was as important that Mrs. Bates should approve Mrs. Tablet as that she should approve Mrs. Bates.

The latter's rheumy old eye, however, upon their return, sketched Sherrard a confirmatory wink; Cecilia Tablet agreed to the rent, and Sherrard closed the deal.

It was actually she who pointed out that since the flat was furnished he was entitled to half the whole period's rent in advance.

Sherrard, always glad of ready money, was both pleased and surprised to find it thus pressed upon him; but it wasn't for this reason alone that he let slide any question of references. He trusted his own and Mrs. Bates' favorable judgment.

"A very nice lady indeed," said Mrs. Bates. "My cousin Edie used to work for her."

"You found that out pretty fast," said Sherrard.

"It's the name," she said.

In fact, Mrs. Tablet's cheque arrived next morning, and was cleared three days later.

Sherrard always boarded a plane loaded with half a dozen solid books which he never opened. An

air-craddled lethargy soon overcame him; he drowsed.

On this occasion, however, owing to an unexpected encounter with his Aunt May, he stayed fully awake for at least the first hour.

She was just leaving the airport as Sherrard arrived.

"Willie, dear boy! What luck!" cried she, and broke forth from her queue into his path. "I've a week in London, can I use your flat?"

"No," said Sherrard.

"Why not? Aren't you going abroad?"

"Yes, but I've let it," said Sherrard.

"Anyone I know?"

"A Mrs. Tablet and a Miss Brown," said Sherrard.

Aunt May's voice sounded quite breathless.

"Did you say Tablet and Brown?"

"That's right," agreed Sherrard.

They were at the barrier, he was just passing through, Aunt May caught his hand and for one last moment held it in a warm, loving clasp.

"My dear, you're an absolute

Christian!" she breathed affectionately. "And so right! I never thought she shot her husband—Miss Brown or no Miss Brown!"

Sherrard settled himself in his seat, fastened his safety-belt, unfastened it again, lit a cigarette, and stayed awake.

The first conclusion he came to was that if a nice woman like his Aunt May thought Mrs. Tablet hadn't shot her husband, there must be at least some ground for thinking that she had. The second was that whether she had or she hadn't, she'd evidently got off. She was alive, out of gaol, renting flats. His flat . . .

Sherrard examined the situation with increasing surprise. It must have happened, whatever did happen, while he was abroad. And it must have been a fairly spectacular case to attract the notice of his Aunt May.

Yet, try as he might—and his complete ignorance left his imagination completely untrammelled—Sherrard found it difficult to picture Mrs. Tablet using a gun. She hadn't

struck him as that sort of woman. She hadn't struck Mrs. Bates—

Here he came to a pause. For surely Mrs. Bates, that avid follower of all police-court news, surely Mrs. Bates must have known? Of course she did; she knew the name. Yet she hadn't said another word—probably presuming her employer in the know, too; or else, presuming him ignorant, because she was on Mrs. Tablet's side . . .

Either way, Sherrard felt Mrs. Bates' silence no less than her confirmatory wink a strong point in his tenant's favor.

Certainly what was good enough for Mrs. Bates, and for his Aunt May, and for the law of the land, was good enough for him, too; Sherrard ceased to speculate, and certainly didn't worry.

In fact the only point that still occupied him a little, before he finally dozed off, was his Aunt May's odd remark. "Miss Brown or no Miss Brown . . ." Where the deuce did Miss Brown come in? She could hardly be The Other Woman if she currently acted as Miss Tablet's

ILLUSTRATED BY

Donaloh

How could he decide whether it was a question of gratitude... or blackmail?

companion... But it was no affair of his, thought Sherrard gratefully; they'd be out before he got back, and in the meanwhile could polish his silver.

His composure was justified. He had a letter from Mrs. Tablet at Athens, reporting moths in his Persian runner; she'd sent it to the best demoting people in London, their charge was thirty shillings, did he think it would be fair to split? Sherrard wrote back at once undertaking the whole outlay.

In Istanbul he learned of, and shared Mrs. Tablet's distress in, the appalling effects of a two-day fog on his Waterford chandelier. Would he risk letting her wash it herself, inquired Mrs. Tablet, or would he rather she summoned an expert?

Sherrard instructed her to go ahead. What a tenant she was!

His first qualm, his first touch of uneasiness, rose from a letter received in Cairo from his old friend Malcolm.

Sherrard wasn't a man much attached to the past; that he should still be friends with his friend Malcolm was, on the face of it, unlikely. (The very phrase—friends with—barking back to schooldays, Sherrard had detested his schooldays.)

Even then they had nothing in common—Sherrard was the brilliant boy, Malcolm the dunce; only the latter's enormous, persistent admiration, drawing on the whole strength of a sweet, stupid, quite unshubbable nature, at last earned Sherrard's half-amused, half-impatient protection.

Hardly won is highly valued; Malcolm kept the friendship up. In later life he developed a genius for money-making—offers of hot tips, yachting holidays, and substantial loans, dogged Sherrard's path.

The latter, who found his friend Malcolm's company intolerably boring, and who preferred to earn whatever income he needed, as doggedly turned a deaf ear; but there was nonetheless a sort of innocence about these offers—these offered treats, so to speak—as could not fail to touch; after thirty years, Sherrard admitted himself still the half-amused, half-impatient protector.

To return to Malcolm's letter, Sherrard's old friend Malcolm, returning from a business trip in South America, naturally went straight round to Sherrard's London flat, where he naturally encountered Mrs. Tablet.

"Whom I should say you're extraordinarily lucky in," wrote Malcolm. "It's like a new pin. I took her out to lunch. We talked about you a lot. I should say she's not only a remarkably nice woman but a fine judge of character."

Sherrard didn't quite know why, but he felt uneasy. His friend Malcolm was now practically a millionaire. He was also extremely simple. Like many men with the gift of money-making, he apparently exercised no other intelligence whatever. Mrs. Tablet might be a fine judge of character; Malcolm was not.

Sherrard discovered that he had been deceiving himself. He knew perfectly well why he was uneasy. He was uneasy because while it is one thing to let one's flat to a woman who didn't shoot her husband, it is quite another to introduce her, even in absentia, to one's simple but millionaire friend.

This was the first time Sherrard just slightly considered the possibility that Mrs. Tablet—might have.

He felt it a particular nuisance that his friend Malcolm was as much out of England as himself. Obviously the names Tablet and Brown conveyed nothing to him, either.

Two days later came a second

letter. "She's been nice enough to lunch with me again," wrote Malcolm. "First, we walked across St. James' Park, to the Abbey. Tomorrow night we're going to a concert. I never realised before how jolly that sort of thing is."

Sherrard despatched a note to his secretary in London, asking for cuttings of the Tablet case. He felt it would settle his mind to read the evidence that Mrs. Tablet—hadn't.

The preliminaries were fairly banal. On the evening of June 5, 1950, after a cocktail party given at their second-floor flat in Cashmere Mansions, Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Tablet violently quarrelled. What wasn't so banal was the result: Mr. Tablet being shot dead.

Cecilia Tablet's statement, which she insisted on making immediately to the police, and the substance of which she repeated before the coroner, was remarkably frank. She and her husband were always quarrelling because he drank too much. It made her life a misery.

On this occasion she taxed him in particular with offending all her friends. He then invited her to divorce him, admitting an infidelity which she already knew of, and which also made her life a misery. To this Mrs. Tablet replied by reminding him there wasn't a war on.

The coroner: "What exactly did you mean by that?"

Mrs. Tablet: "Well, in the war he was really very brave. He was a paratrooper. So on leave it was only fair to let him do just as he liked. But we had to settle down some time."

(This passage was in typescript—Sherrard's accomplished secretary had got hold of a verbatim report. Sherrard at this point felt considerable sympathy with Mrs. Tablet. There are heroes and heroines; some, in civil life, a damned nuisance.)

The coroner: "I see. Will you go on?"

Mrs. Tablet: "So I told him not to be silly."

The coroner: "And then?"

And then Mrs. Tablet proceeded to give herself a motive. Sherrard wondered whether she'd had her solicitor in court; and, if so, what his emotions were.

Mrs. Tablet: "Well, then Matthew said he'd divorce me. He couldn't have, of course. I mean, I hadn't been unfaithful for a minute. But he might have made an awful lot of unpleasantness and my people would simply have hated it. I mean, I'd have done anything to stop him."

The coroner: "Anything?"

Mrs. Tablet: "Well, anything within reason, of course. So I told him, again not to be silly."

It was then that Matthew Tablet, ex-paratrooper and man of notoriously violent temper, produced his Service revolver and threatened to shoot himself.

Mrs. Tablet didn't believe him serious, but, because he was intoxicated, tried to take the weapon from him. He knocked her away, she heard a shot, briefly lost consciousness, and revived to find him either dying or dead.

Miss Brown's evidence was thus extremely valuable. Miss Brown, hearing the quarrel from her next-door flat, from pure curiosity went out on to her balcony. As the debate grew more heated, so did Miss Brown's interest; until she finally hopped over the rail and gained the Tablet balcony adjoining just in time to see Matthew Tablet knock his wife spinning, himself lose balance, and fall to the sound of a shot.

Miss Brown: "Mrs. Tablet re-

covered almost immediately. She was wonderfully brave. Because we could see at once what had happened."

Mrs. Tablet telephoned for a doctor at once. Neither woman touched the defunct Matthew. They waited hand-in-hand by the telephone—Miss Brown comforting Mrs. Tablet.

The coroner: "Not attempting to render any assistance?"

Miss Brown: "I told you, we could see it was no use."

A Dr. Mallard's evidence corroborated her. It had all been over instantaneously—rather remarkable precision, through the heart.

Yet perfectly possible, in such circumstances; and, difficult as it was to impound all firearms if their owners weren't co-operative, here one saw the unhappy result... He had summoned the police at once.

The deceased had died of a gunshot wound, accidentally self-inflicted.

Cecilia Tablet, thought Sherrard, was either an extraordinarily honest woman or else an extraordinarily accomplished liar. There appeared no reason to believe her the latter; the whole background of the case—the Tablets' background and Miss Brown's—would have been most thoroughly checked by the police, and the police were satisfied.

It was perhaps just a trifle unexpected that Mrs. Tablet and Miss

Dramatic short story By MARGERY SHARP

Brown should now be living in each other's pocket.

Sherrard felt he might as well make a job of the thing; stuffing cutting and typescript into a pocket, he set out to track among the night spots a British journalist he knew to be holidaying in Cairo.

"The Tablet case?" repeated Tim Brocken dimly. "Dear man, ain't it dead as a doornail?"

"I've let her my flat," said Sherrard, who never wasted imagination. "I'd just like to know why Miss Brown still strings along."

Tim Brocken looked into his whisky.

"Live and let live... Though wouldn't we all? You read about it, I suppose?"

"I've read about it," agreed Sherrard.

"Well, the Brown, a really very unpleasant little creature, has been living with her ever since. Or on her? I wouldn't know," sighed Tim Brocken. "It's a bit odd, d'you see? They weren't friends. They were neighbors, all right—which in London means they wouldn't know each other in the street. On the face of it, they haven't a thing in common."

"Mrs. Tablet, as I recall, comes of rather nice, quiet country folk. Miss Brown ran a bankrupt flower-shop, with a sideline as hostess in a nightclub. So they weren't friends; they hadn't a thing in common."

"Since the case, they've been inseparable. Where Mrs. Tablet goes, there goes Miss Brown also. Mrs. Tablet having money of her own. And as a result, all her nice friends, and all the nice, quiet folk have quite nicely and quietly dropped her. They don't like Miss Brown. They think Cecilia made a great mistake in taking Miss Brown up. So do I, for that matter. So would anyone with a grain of sense. It looks to me very much like..."

"Well?" said Sherrard.

Tim Brocken hesitated. When it comes to pronouncing the word "blackmail" a good journalist is as wary as a good solicitor. So Tim Brocken hesitated, while Sherrard accurately read his mind.

"Mightn't it, on the other hand," he suggested, "be gratitude?"

"Why not? I wouldn't know," sighed Tim Brocken. The unpronounceable word nonetheless hung in the air. Blackmail, or gratitude? Like Tim Brocken, Sherrard wouldn't know; and he couldn't make up his mind.

But did he need to?

The boredom of years came to a head; with sudden irritation Sherrard saw his old friend Malcolm a finally intolerable nuisance. It struck him, in fact, that this would be an excellent moment to stop feeling protective. The sentiment was in itself ridiculous. Sherrard therefore left all Malcolm's letters unanswered, and put the affair from his mind.

Unfortunately, as a result of certain political changes in Iran, he wasn't left abroad as long as he expected. A week later, London recalled him. He was away not six months, but three.

Mrs. Tablet still occupied his flat. Sherrard felt it only fair—her phrase was beginning to haunt him—to take, on his return, a room at his club; but he needed more clothes, and, since it was absurd to order two new suits rather than call at his own flat, he paid a visit there next day.

Mrs. Tablet wasn't in, but Miss Brown was. Her appearance didn't engage him: Miss Brown proved a small

dried-to-the-bone blonde with wide, pussy-kitten eyes. But she purred about Sherrard at once, offering him, beside his suits, a gin-and-Italian.

It was five in the afternoon; just too early, but not scandalously so. Sherrard felt certain Mrs. Tablet would have offered tea—probably with bread and butter. Politeness impelled him to ask where she was.

"Out with Malcolm, of course," purred Miss Brown.

Her first name was Elfin. Sherrard learned it at once, she told it to him at once, while he was still half inside the cupboard Mrs. Tablet had allowed him to reserve; such a fairy-like little thing Miss Brown had been, her parents christened her Elfin. Sherrard didn't respond with his own baptismal William. He had taken a dislike to Miss Brown, and wished to get away as soon as possible.

Miss Brown appeared equally anxious that he shouldn't. She flattered about him impudently. Her vivacity increased—the vivacity of a nightclub hostess a little past her work, which, in another woman, Sherrard could have found touching.

He rebuked himself for lack of charity, but continued to dislike Miss Brown. When she began to inquire about his friend Malcolm's financial standing, he disliked her even more.

"Because import-export can mean anything—can't it?" fluted Miss Brown. "And I do feel, in a way, responsible for Cecilia." She dropped her voice confidentially. "You know, of course, how we're linked?"

To prevent her telling him, Sherrard admitted that he did. But evidently his tone wasn't quite satisfactory; perhaps it wasn't quite sympathetic enough. Miss Brown laid a small hand on his sleeve.

"Some people, I know, say Cecilia

feels responsible for me. And that's true, too, in a way—though not in the way they mean. It's just Cecilia's sweet, grateful heart." The big pussy-kitten eyes widened. "We're just like two sisters; and how her relatives can be horrid passes comprehension."

Sherrard felt this was carrying kitten-innocence too far altogether; irritation loosed his tongue.

"Possibly they would prefer Mrs. Tablet to cut loose from the past more completely."

Poor little Elfin flinched—but only for a moment.

"If you mean me," she said bravely, "don't think I can't see the point. And if you think I haven't suggested it to Cecilia, you're quite, quite wrong. I have. But she says it's only fair, after what I did for her, she should do all she can for me; and, as she hasn't so very much money, we can only manage together. But, of course, if she marries again, and marries well, things will be quite, quite different," said Miss Brown, much more brightly.

Sherrard took the point without difficulty. A millionaire's wife's pin-money might well keep a Miss Brown in affluence. He found the whole matter extremely distasteful; he would still have let it drop, got out and got away, had not Elfin at that last moment invited him to—complicity.

"Malcolm tall—about you all the time," murmured she. "He has such a respect for your judgment; if he knew you admired Cecilia, too, I believe it would really influence him!"

"Miss Brown," said Sherrard. "You are going out of your way to convince me you committed perjury. There could be no other reason for your apparent—hold—over Mrs. Tablet. I advise you for the sake of your own reputation—and reputation might be the least of it—to get out of this flat tomorrow, and never come back."

In the twinkling of an eye the pussy-kitten turned cat.

"And I advise you," spat Elfin Brown, "to mind your own damned business. You get out, and don't come back! This isn't your flat, let me remind you, just for the moment. It's Mrs. Tablet's—and mine!"

Sherrard was only too glad to be thus ejected. He already regretted his impulsive interference. But he wasn't to escape so easily; there entered, just as he made for the lobby, Cecilia Tablet and his old friend Malcolm.

And with them a complete change of atmosphere. Calm and idyllic airs entered with them. They looked exactly as though they had been doing what in fact they had; that is, driving out to Richmond Park, and there strolling to admire the view.

Mrs. Tablet looked particularly nice; she had on a good tweed suit, sensible shoes, and a becoming hat.

Malcolm, also in tweeds, looked healthy, good-humored, and delighted with himself. At the sight of Sherrard he looked more delighted still, and, after the first ejaculations of happy surprise, at once said: "What about dinner?"

Sherrard said he was sorry, he had to see his editor; he'd just come in to pick up some clothes.

"Does the flat look nice?" demanded Mrs. Tablet urgently.

Sherrard, who until then had scarcely glanced round, cast an eye over the sitting-room and said, "Splendid." It did.

"Malcolm's dining here," pressed

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Sally and the Christmas Angel



MY name is Raphael. You think that is a rummy name? Well, angels must have a name of some kind, and I am an angel. I am one of the Cherubim (Third Class) who work with Raphael "the affable archangel." Our business is to try to make human beings love one another.

For my sins — yes, we cherubs can be naughty and Raphael is always telling me I am far too pleased with myself, and too interested in flying fast—for my sins I was told off to sort out and make good one complete human problem by midnight on Christmas night. It was Christmas eve by then, so you can imagine I had to get a move on.

I picked on Dame Beatrice Canterbury, D.B.E., a concert pianist, coming back from

a tour in the U.S.A. To be honest, I picked her because she was travelling in a super jet air-liner. I don't see, do you, why an angel shouldn't combine business with pleasure? I caught up with her when she was sitting all hunched up in her furs, glaring out at the glorious dawn as the plane touched down at Gander, Newfoundland. She was travelling with her secretary, a pretty girl of twenty-two called Sally. They both looked as cross as two sticks.

Dame Beatrice said she felt sick and she hated Christmas and she wished she hadn't decided to spend it in her house in London. But she had bought this exquisite antique mirror and she couldn't very well go on lugging it round America and Europe, could she? Even so, perhaps it would be better to turn right around and go to Miami after all? Sally said "Nonsense" and "You'll feel better when you've had some coffee." And she pushed Dame Beatrice into a sort of snack-bar that they have there in Gander.

It was jolly cold, I can tell you. There was actual snow on the ground. So I followed them into the snack-bar. It was warm in there.

As you probably know, only those who are young in heart can see an angel. Very few human beings are young in heart at four o'clock in the morning. I felt I was quite safe in following them into the snack-bar while they sorted themselves out.

There was a leggy young American in a sincere tie and horn-rimmed glasses with an absolute battery of fountain-pens and propelling pencils in his waistcoat pocket. He took one look at Sally, jumping up and down in her efforts to get coffee for herself and Dame Beatrice.

The Dame was sitting by herself on a slippery red seat, reading about herself in yesterday's "New York Herald Tribune." He took one look at Sally, as I say. Then he went slowly scarlet. Then he went up to the counter and elbowed (quite fiercely) several

people to one side. He bought a cup of coffee, sought her out and handed it to her.

"At your service, ma'am," he said. "Andrew K. Pulsen. A nuclear physicist. Presently travelling to London, England."

He took off his hat and held it against his chest. Sally was so startled that she nearly dropped the cup.

"Oh," said Sally. "Fancy. Well, I ought to give this to Dame Beatrice. She's my boss. The coffee, I mean. It's kind of you to take so much trouble."

And Sally, too, blushed scarlet. "I can imagine no greater pleasure, ma'am," said Andrew K. Pulsen, "than travelling through life taking trouble over you."

"Oh," said Sally again. "Fancy." But anyone could see that her heart was thumping hard and her blood was beating in her ears.

"Forgive me," said Andrew K. Pulsen, "for being so forward. But I can imagine a young lady like yourself with many, many ad-



The cherub could see they were all unhappy . . . Sally, Dame Beatrice, Andrew, and Ben . . . and it was his task to cheer them up before the clock chimed midnight

mirers. Now I do not admire many people. Particularly not young ladies—"

"No?" said Sally. She looked round her. She was half-pleased and half-afraid that someone would overhear all this. Also, she wondered if he could possibly mean it.

"But you are the one girl for me," said Andrew K., and then went white with astonishment and fear that he had gone too far. And he too felt the thunder in his soul.

"Sally—Sally!" called Dame Beatrice from her corner.

"Excuse me," said Sally, and fled.

After this I couldn't resist having a closer look at the aeroplane. You can imagine, so odd crazy as I am, that it was a marvellous opportunity to see a jet-propelled aircraft at close quarters. I do love jets. But most unfortunately when I flew round the tail to have a look, it happened. I got some oil on my wing feathers.

I don't know if you have ever seen a cherub, but we have no bodies, no legs or arms or chests. We only have wings and heads. Very practical, in many ways. But if you get some really clogging engine oil on your feathers it is the end.

However, on one wing I managed to flutter up the companion-ladder into the plane, while they were refuelling. I found Dame Beatrice's seat quite easily. It had a very smart black brief-case with "B. C." on it in silver.

Sally's seat was right beside the Dame's. Sally had left a novel there called *Hearts are Trumps*. So at least Sally liked to read about love. That was a step in the right direction.

Somehow I managed to flutter up into the rack on one wing before the stewardess, who looked awfully like one of our senior seraphim, came back into the plane and before the passengers had all settled down and the stewardess asked them to fasten their seat belts.

My word. That flight really was something. I can fly pretty fast, but that plane beat me by at least 400 miles an hour. And all the time I was enjoying myself I could feel that beastly oil stiffening on my wing feathers.

I tried to lick it off, but I couldn't get my head turned round far enough. In the end I had to try to attract Sally's attention.

"Hey . . ." I went, and "Hey . . ."

She couldn't hear. It was too bad. I let out a piercing whistle. Everybody looked round. But fortunately only Sally looked up, glanced away and then looked back again. Her mouth fell slowly open. She had her glasses on to read her book and she really looked very plain.

"Hey," I said. "Please. I'm sorry to bother you, but I've got my wing all stuck up. Oil. Have you got any Dabitol?"

"Sh . . ." said Sally. "For heaven's sake don't wake Dame Beatrice. She's only just gone to sleep."

She looked away and then looked back again. Her mouth was still wide open, making a large round "O." "What are you?" she said. "It's a dream, of course."

"I'm a cherub," I said. I was very cross. "Don't be silly. Of course I'm not a dream. Please take me to the cloakroom and wash me. I've tried and tried, but I can't get the stuff off . . ."

Sally suddenly burst out laughing. She looked very pretty, like she had looked when she was talking to Andrew K. Puben. She stood up and carried me very gently, I must say, down the aisle in a big shopping-bag.

There was a lot of little parcels in it, done up in tissue-paper. Christmas presents, I suppose. The stuff she used on my wing smelt beastly and she had to rub very hard but eventually the oil came off. She was very kind, when she understood who I was.

She thought Ramael a curious.

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by
**NANCY
SPAIN**



Her name was Folly

By DONALD M. BERWICK

ILLUSTRATED BY LASKIE

OFF to the east, a faint glow brightened the early morning sky as the sleek ocean liner, with its sloping red smokestacks, ploughed westward. Van Tilbury made his way to the stern of the ship, and leaned over to watch the churning wake.

Last night, the French coast had been in view. Now there was nothing but the sea and sky. Six days to the west, the gleaming towers of Manhattan would spell an end to vacation-time, those two wonderful months in Europe. It was his first return since the war. Rising young executives don't often manage to squeeze out a two months' trip abroad. But, still, it was good to be coming home.

He filled his lungs with salt air and shouted into the wind. Then he turned laughing at his exuberance, and there, behind him, stood the Tragic Muse, or at least a reasonable facsimile.

She was really just a very pretty young American in a saggy-looking polo coat, looking dismally sad. She was leaning against a stanchion and her big eyes stared right through Van.

"Good morning," he said. "You're up early."

She started, and the corners of her lips twisted in a chill half-smile. "Yes," she said, and turned up the collar of her coat, as if to shut out further communication.

"Feeling all right?" he asked, willing to try again.

"Fine," she said. "Just fine."

"I was afraid you might be a bit—oh, you know."

She shook her head. "I'm quite all right, thank you. I just want to be alone."

Van blinked, stood unsteadily on the shifting deck for a moment, and then swung off along the starboard promenade. He knew a rebuff when he met it, and he also knew that there were plenty of good-looking girls aboard the ship. They'd come out of their cabins in droves to lie in the sun today. Nothing tragic about them, no Garbo act to spoil the camaraderie that usually develops during an Atlantic crossing.

He tried to dismiss the girl from his mind, though he couldn't help seeing her as he paced the deck. She didn't move much, just stared back towards the invisible shores of Europe, lips drawn tight, hands in pockets. She was still there when Van went below for breakfast.

The dining-room was nearly empty when he entered it. It was still early and none of the five people assigned as his tablemates turned up, so Van ate in lonely splendor. "A bunch of old maids," he thought, and he ordered an enormous breakfast, feeling virile and virtuous.

He had started on his second cup of coffee when there was a stir at the dining-room door. "Good morning, young man!" boomed a female voice to the steward at the entrance. The woman breezed into the room as if she owned the place. She was a handsome, large woman in her forties, with glistening black hair pulled

back and tied into a tight knot behind.

"Good morning," she shouted again to the room at large.

The steward led her to an empty table not far from Van. She caught his eye as she started to sit down and cried, "Oh, now look! This is silly. Can't we join forces? I'm celebrating my first good, old-fashioned American breakfast since I left the States. Can't I eat with that young man?"

The steward mumbled something indistinct about the ship's rule on table assignments. She sunk into her seat with a heavy sigh, then looked at Van and winked. "At least, they can't prevent our chatting, can they?"

Van smiled. "Just let them try," he said, keeping his voice low.

"What a lovely, lovely selection!" she said, picking up her menu. "It's good to be home again." She concentrated for a moment, then gave her order with the force and clarity of a public pronouncement.

Van drained his cup and rose. Passing her table on the way out, he paused. "I trust we'll have fine a trip together," he said.

"Oh, I'm sure we will!" Her voice was full of enthusiasm and ringing resonance. "My name's Mason. And..." She hesitated for a dramatic moment, her head cocked to one side. "And I have a daughter, though I've no idea where she is. She disappeared, simply fled, from the cabin at dawn. Such a moody child... Good gracious! Here I am blabbing and I don't even know your name."

VAN grinned and introduced himself, then hastily beat a retreat. But her reference to a moody daughter piqued his curiosity. With quickening interest, he decided that the effervescent Mrs. Mason's daughter must be Miss Tragic Muse of 1955. What a pair! he thought, whistling softly.

He went out on deck. Lots of people lay in steamer chairs along the outer passageways now, a few chatting with their neighbors, but most just reading or sleeping in the sun. When Van saw Mrs. Mason at a distance, he hurried over.

She was examining a lifeboat with great care. "Hello there," she said. "I was wondering if they've got any canned goods hidden away. I'd hate to starve in mid-ocean, wouldn't you?"

Van smiled as he nodded. "Where's your daughter?"

"Oh, Folly's sulking again. She'd tear me to shreds if she heard me say that." She tossed her cigarette into the wind, and it flew back on deck.

"Does Folly wear a polo coat?" Van asked, laughing.

Mrs. Mason nodded. "Isn't she attractive?" She took his arm, and they began to pick their way through the massed steamer chairs towards the lounge.

"There's nothing prettier than a good-looking American girl—except a handsome man, maybe. But take

my advice, Mr. Tilbury, and never have a daughter!"

She continued to chatter as they walked down a broad staircase and took seats in the lounge, a handsome room decorated with gay circus murals.

Van found himself answering a series of extremely personal questions: Yes, he'd been on a long summer vacation. Yes, he was young—twenty-six, to be exact. No, he hadn't been christened Van; his full first name was Venning, but he hated it.

"Names are so funny. Mine is Rebecca," said Mrs. Mason. "Fancy being called Becky all your life! When Folly was born, Mr. Mason wanted to call her Mary, and he fought like a tiger. But I was determined. And Folly she is."

Then she was off on another tack: Had he stayed long in Paris? Yes, and he thought it enchanting. Well, perhaps it was, but, "I'll still take Philadelphia, thank you," she said. "You must come see us there. We live just a bit out of town. You know." She paused in mid-air. "Darling!" she called. "Here we are. Come over here."

Van looked up. The girl stood halfway across the room. She was motionless at first, then gave a perceptible shrug and made her way over. She still wore the polo coat, and a silk kerchief on her head. As she approached, she whisked off the kerchief, and her hair tumbled down about her neck. To Van, her blond hair seemed quite the loveliest thing he'd ever seen.

"Did you have breakfast?" Mrs. Mason questioned abruptly.

"Yes, Mother, I ate," said the girl impatiently.

"Are you feeling well, dear?"

"Yes, Mother. Feeling fine."

"This is Van Tilbury, darling. We've been having a lovely chat."

Van had risen. "We've already met," he said simply.

"Have we?" The girl looked at him without an answering smile.

Mrs. Mason, though, smiled broadly. She patted her black hair, still damp from the spray and looked as pleased as if she'd engineered a major coup. "And now I must run!" she said, jumping up. "I have an appointment with the hairdresser and I'm hours late! Go watch the waves, you two. It's lovely out."

Van cleared his throat nervously when Mrs. Mason had gone. "Would you like to walk about a bit?" he said.

"You mustn't mind Mother," said Folly. "She means well."

"I don't mind her at all. I've been wondering about you, though."

"Don't mind me, either." A wintry smile flickered over her lips, and her eyes brightened slightly.

"Your mother and I are old friends by now," said Van.

Folly loosened her coat and suddenly sat down. "Let's sit for a while," she said. "I don't want to look at the sea." She paused and

then said, "She's flinging me at you. She never has her hair done, you know."

"I'm grateful."

"Don't be coy," Folly snapped.

"What's your name again?"

"Van Tilbury. And I'm not coy."

"Have you been abroad long?"

"A couple of months. I could've stood another year or two."

Her eyes darkened. "I had a whole year. I'd have had longer, only... Mother came over six weeks ago to save me. And here I am. Saved."

"I'm sorry," said Van. "It sounds gruesome."

"Do you know what I was thinking when you saw me this morning? I wanted to jump in the ocean and just swim... Oh, don't misunderstand me—not suicide or anything. I simply felt I could swim all the way back to France, where I belong."

"And to the man you love," said Van, suddenly grasping the situation in all its pathetic simplicity.

FOLLY tossed her head angrily. "Don't make it sound corny," she said. "Because it isn't corny."

"I know." He spoke with almost excessive gentleness. He could tell. She had been deeply hurt. "Want to talk about it?"

"I don't know why I should. Mother's probably told you all the details."

"Oh, now look!" All at once Van felt sorry for this surly girl's well-meaning mother. "Seems to me you're being unjustifiably—"

She broke in, her voice throbbing with contempt: "She always tells everything to everybody! She's told you I'm twenty-two and ought to've grown up. She's told you she wasted money on an art course for me and all I did was fall for a ne'er-do-well, so she had to tear herself away from the comforts of home and come over to protect me. She's told you I fit my name, and—" She was almost sobbing. "Oh, don't tell me she didn't give you my full history."

Van rose. "Sorry," he said. "She told me nothing and I kind of wish you hadn't, either. Want to take a stroll?"

"I just want to be alone," she said between clenched teeth.

"Excuse me, then," he murmured.

He sauntered away and went out on deck, then made his way down to the library. A pretty, young lady who was half-heartedly leafing through a magazine smiled companionably as he entered. He gave her a distant nod, signed out a detective story, and seated himself in a corner.

He had finished three chapters when a voice at his shoulder said,

"Hello, Mr. Tilbury. Am I interrupting you?"

It was Folly Mason—but with glowing eyes and a wide smile.

"Hi," he said, closing the book.

"I've been looking for you. I wanted to apologise." She glanced around the room. "Can we go somewhere and talk?"

"Sure," said Van, but he purposely kept his voice cool. He was determined not to get any further involved.

Folly Mason had undergone a sea change, though. As they walked to the lounge she began to talk and all her brooding petulance gave way to sweetness and warmth. "Can you forgive me for acting silly?" she began. "I'm so ashamed!"

"Forget it," said Van.

"I'll try," she promised solemnly. "This is a terribly hard trip for me, and I guess I've been acting like a baby. It makes it hard for Mother, too—and she's really a dear, you know. I've been frightful to her."

"Do you always obey her?" Van asked. "I mean when she says no, do you just weep along with the idea?"

"It's never happened this way before. For one thing I've never been in love. For another, Mother foots the bills and David can't quite support me—not yet, anyhow. I'll get a job now, though I've never had one before."

"What's come over you?" said Van. "I mean this sudden change."

She flung back her head and laughed. "It's the sun and sea," she said. "And I don't want to be alone, not really." Suddenly she said, "David and I are going to win out, you know."

"Good," he murmured. He felt a vague twinge of envy.

Folly got to her feet. "I like you," she said. "Can you play shuffleboard?"

A day aboard ship is the longest day of the year and friendships develop with startling rapidity. By dinner time, Folly and Van were fast friends. They played a hazardous game of shuffleboard, they went to the movies, they talked. At lunch, two



The prettiest girl on the ship . . . and she was in love with another man

elderly gentlemen joined the Masons at their table, and Van felt pleased that he had no real competition.

The next day passed in much the same fashion. There were intervals when Folly disappeared, and at such times Van tried to catch up on his correspondence, eagerly putting everything aside when Folly showed up.

There was no doubt about it. Folly Mason had her difficult moments, but when she snapped out of them she was the world's finest travelling companion. She was in love with another man, but every dip of the great ship's bow took her farther away from him and closer to Van Tilbury. He couldn't help gloating a little.

Mrs. Mason found a number of noisy excuses for leaving Folly and Van alone together and seemed delighted at their flowering companionship. She did join them at the dance the second night out.

"Don't dare ask me to dance," she said to Van. "I'm vintage 1925 and I'd probably walk all over your feet!"

But he insisted, and as they danced Van looked over at Folly.

"You have a lovely daughter," he said. "I'm sorry you're treating her so badly."

Mrs. Mason fell out of step for an instant. "Oh, Van!" she cried. "What in the world has the child told you?" For once Mrs. Mason spoke softly. "If you only knew," she said in a low voice. "Folly was supposed to be studying in Paris, but she wrote such transparent letters. You should have read them, Van, you really should. After a while I simply had to come over to meet this boy she kept talking about."

"Well, he wasn't a boy — he just looked like a boy. He was a man in his thirties. Oh, a positive adventurer — you couldn't mistake him! When I got to Paris and saw him, I just couldn't let Folly make this mistake."

"Look, Van," she said. "My Folly's a child in spite of her years and it's someone like you she needs. Oh, it's been wonderful seeing you two together these past few days. I don't know much about you, mind, but I can tell just by — oh, it's

simple. But this person, this David . . . his name's David Girard, which sounds French. But he's not French, he's American, just like us. I didn't like him from the moment we met."

"He's a sort of pseudo-Bohemian who just wants to sit around at sidewalk cafes and drink. You know the type. And he has no visible means of support. But there's more than that — you'd just have to see him, that's all. Van, I wouldn't hurt my girl for anything. But I had to get her away and I did — even if she does hate me for it."

Van was puzzled. Her picture of the man was hardly the lurid one she seemed to think it. And yet Van wasn't sure where he stood, with a pushing mother on one hand and a heartsick girl on the other. "Oh, well," he thought, "I'll never meet the guy and I'll probably never see the Masons again, either. Shipboard

romances are fun, but they seldom pan out."

After he and Mrs. Mason returned to the table, Folly whispered, "Let's take a walk. It's nice out on deck tonight."

They went out and hung over the rail watching the phosphorous flecks slide away on waves of foam.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" Van said.

Folly turned to him: "Mother was talking to you about David, wasn't she?"

"I suppose so. A little."

"You'll meet him tomorrow," Folly said. "He's here, you know."

He swung her around fiercely.

"He's what?" he shouted.

"David's here. In first class. I've been seeing him."

"You mean it was a surprise? He didn't know you were aboard?"

"Of course he did. That's why he's here — don't you see?"

Van lighted a cigarette. "I don't understand," he said at last. "You said he was poor, yet he's travelling first class. You say you've been seeing him yet when I first met you —" A sudden thought struck him. "Oh! So that's when the sunshine crept in. That's why you came back to life yesterday."

She nodded. "I'd just seen him." He listened in perplexed silence.

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"Well," said Van to David, who was lighting a cigarette, "Folly and I must go now but it's been nice to have met you."



Marjorie Morningstar

Instalment seven of
our fine, romantic
eight-part serial

BY HERMAN
WOOK

ILLUSTRATED BY DUNLOP

SINCE attractive MARJORIE MORGENSTERN and temperamental song-writer NOEL AIRMAN met at the holiday camp South Wind, they have been infatuated with one another. It is an erratic, unsatisfactory romance, but though they have broken with one another at various times, a fatal attraction always brings them together again.

Marjorie, meanwhile, has been trying to establish herself as an actress with the stage name Morningstar. Her infatuation for Noel and her whole unsatisfactory way of life cause great concern to her conventional, hard-working parents.

Noel has drifted about various jobs, interspersed with wild, temperamental outbursts and sudden trips away. During one of their separations, Marjorie learns that his musical play, "Princess Jones," is soon to be produced on Broadway.

She meets him again at the wedding of her friend MARSHA ZELENKO to LOU MICHAELSON. Marsha admits that she invited Noel in the hope of bringing him and Marjorie together again, and in a passionate outburst she urges Marjorie to seize her happiness with Noel at all cost. That night, fired by Marsha's tirade, Marjorie embarks on an affair with Noel after attending a dress rehearsal of "Princess Jones" with him. NOW READ ON:



ONE year later, almost to the day, Marjorie Morgenstern was frantically fighting her way up the third-class gangplank of the big liner, against a solid stream of people leaving the ship. She was not halfway up the plank when gongs sounded and a loudspeaker bawled, "Last call. Visitors ashore. Last call."

The ship's officer at the head of the gangplank held out a hand to stop her as she set foot on deck. "So sorry, miss. You're too late."

She looked him straight in the face. He was red-faced and lean, no taller than she. "I have to talk to my—my fiancé. Just for a minute. But I have to talk to him." She stood her ground with difficulty, jostled by dozens of visitors funnelling into the gangway.

He took in her smart clothes with a glance, and looked over his shoulder at a clock. His voice became less formal. "Very important, I guess it is?"

"As important as anything can be."

With a bleak grin he nodded her past him, and she went running downstairs to the lower decks.

The stateroom number was correct; she recognised Noel's luggage piled on the berth. It was a tiny dim interior cabin on the lowest deck. She glanced up and down the passageway; he was nowhere in sight. Hurriedly she began a search of the passageways. Past bashfulness or diffidence, she shouldered into noisy cabins where farewell parties were breaking up, looked around to make sure he wasn't in the room, and went away without a word, leaving people snickering behind her. The gongs kept sounding with startling loudness; over and over the loudspeakers called "Visitors ashore, please. Last call. All ashore at once, please."

She began to run. She ran through empty writing-rooms, through a lounge, through a

dining-room, through a bar. She made another panic-stricken tour of the passageways, finding herself in the same ones over and over, like a rat in a maze.

She had had several nightmares like this: nightmares of looking for Noel through endless twisting corridors. This might almost have been another nightmare, except that it was too coherent, too vivid, too matter-of-fact. It was really happening; she knew that. But an eerie dreamlike feeling possessed her, a feeling that she had actually looked for him—or had dreamed that she had looked for him—in just this way, through these very passageways, long, long ago.

Somebody touched her arm. She sensed it would be a rosy-faced cabin boy in a blue uniform; and it was. "You a passenger, miss?"

"No, I—"

"All visitors have to leave this minute, miss, sorry. They're taking in the gangplanks."

She looked around desperately. "Thank you." She hurried to the gangplank.

"Find your friend, miss?" said the little red-faced officer.

She gave him a harried smile, and followed a solitary fat man down the gangplank. She walked up and down the pier behind the fenced-in visitors, staring up at the colossal steel side of the ship, scanning the waving, laughing, shouting passengers lining the rails.

Great cranes reached down and plucked up the gangplanks. Sailors on the ship began hauling in the huge manila lines. A band started to play a brassy march, but the music was nearly drowned in the snorting and clanking of the cranes, and the cheers and yells that filled the immense shed.

She wasn't sure it was Noel when she first saw him, because he wore a new dark green hat of an odd flat shape; but she recognised the loose camel's hair topcoat, and the slouch of the shoulders. He was at

the rail of one of the lower decks, far forward. She hurried to a point opposite him and waved from the back of the crowd.

He didn't see her. He held a highball glass in his hand, and he was talking to a plump woman in a red suit, who also was drinking a highball. Marjorie worked through the jammed-together people to the fence, alternately pushing and apologising.

As she came to the front of the crowd, there were three horrifying whistle-blasts. She waved her arms and shrieked, "Noel!" in the instant of near-quiet after the last blast. He heard it; he glanced along the pier, and then he saw her. He shook his head as though in wonder, smiled, and rather sheepishly waved. He said something to the woman in the red suit, pointing at Marjorie; the woman looked at her and laughed, and said something that made Noel laugh. He raised his glass to Marjorie, shouted something she didn't hear, and drank.

She yelled, "Write to me!"

He cupped his hands to his ear.

"Write to me! Write to me, I say!" The people on either side of her at the fence stared and smiled, but she was beyond self-consciousness. "Write to me!"

He shrugged to indicate that he couldn't hear her. He spoke to the woman in the red suit, and she shrugged, too, looking intently at Marjorie. She was too far away for Marjorie to see her features clearly; she appeared to be about forty, and not unattractive.

Marjorie held up the flat side of her purse, made a gesture of writing on it and sealing an envelope, then pointed to Noel and to herself. He grinned, and shook his head vehemently. She repeated the gesture with emphasis. He shook his head equally emphatically, and pantomimed putting a pistol to his temple. Before her eyes she saw the ship's rivets slide slowly to the left.

A cheer went up from the people on the pier, and colored paper streamers rained

from ship to shore. The band struck up "Rule, Britannia." Marjorie again made the writing gesture, and with a tearful smile shook her fist at Noel. He laughed, raised the glass to her again, drained it, and tossed it into the widening water between the pier and the ship. The woman in the red suit threw back her head laughing, and patted him on the shoulder.

Marjorie took out her handkerchief and waved and waved, as long as she could distinguish Noel. She thought she saw his hand wave in answer once or twice. With the rest of the crowd she ran to the head of the pier and watched the tugs pull the vast ship out into the muddy, choppy Hudson and turn it around.

She watched the ship go down the river, getting smaller and smaller. She was almost the last of the visitors to leave the pier.

She took the letter from her purse in the



Marjorie fell uneasily silent, watching with the German girl, as Mike grimly forced his opponent into error after error.

taxicab on the way home. It was very long, typed in Noel's neat, clear, double-spaced way on his customary thin yellow paper. She had not yet read it carefully. Finding it at the door in the morning mail, she had surmised at once from its bulk what it was, and had skimmed it at top speed for the immediate facts. Though he said in it that he would be several days at sea when she received it, she had at once scanned the "Times" sailing list and then rushed down to the pier, where she had pestered the pursers until she found out that Noel was a third-class passenger.

She started to read the letter once more; but she began to feel a little ill, possibly from reading in a bumpy cab, and she folded it away in the purse.

She was glad to find nobody in the apartment when she got home. She heated the coffee that was left on the kitchen stove, and the smell made her realise that she was very hungry. This surprised her. She would have guessed she would be unable to eat for a couple of days after a blow like this. Perhaps it was that the blow, however cruel and distressing, wasn't entirely unexpected. Anyway, she was roaring hungry. She ate a roll with butter and thick chunks of cheese; then poured more coffee and ate another roll and more cheese.

She ate whatever she pleased these days, and as much as she pleased. In the year of her affair with Noel she had grown very fashionably thin. Her waist was not much more than two spans around, and her hips had never been slimmer.

She went to her room, feeling remarkably good after the food, sat at her dressing-table, and stared in the round mirror for a long time at her jilted friend, Marjorie Morgenstern. It was surprising how little upset she was. But this calm did not especially reassure her. Past twenty-two, she had learned something about the way she reacted to shocks.

The bad time lay ahead. It might not even start for a couple of days, but she knew that when it came it was likely to be pretty frightful.

Well, she thought, contemplating her mirror image, Noel had thrown her over at last, and this time with a seeming massive finality. The letter could hardly be more clear. And with characteristic perversity, he had discarded her when she was at her most attractive; when for the first time her career showed some promise; when she had given him all she had to give, and when he was in love with her as he had never been—though he obstinately refused to acknowledge it.

It was no vanity to believe she was looking better than ever. The

main change in her appearance in the past year, she guessed, was that she looked like a woman, not a girl. A powerful femininity glowed from within her. She was aware of it from its effects. Men had never pursued her harder than in this year, when, possessed by Noel, she had been completely incapable of paying any attention to them. It was too bad the alteration in her had come not from a happy marriage, she reflected, but from an illicit affair, which had just exploded in her face.

But life went on, even for the broken-hearted and the numb in spirit. She glanced at her wrist-watch, went wearily to the telephone, and dialled.

"Hello? Is Len there? This is Margie Morningstar. No, no, don't bother him, Mike. Just give him a message when there's a break in the rehearsal, will you? Tell him I'm sorry I'm late, something came up. . . . No, everything's okay, I should be there in half an hour. Are they up to my scene? . . . Well, fine. 'Bye.'"

She quickly changed into the warm brown wool dress she had been wearing at rehearsals because of the dank draughts backstage at the Lyceum. Marjorie had come far in the past year. She had a real part in a real Broadway play, and everyone in the company knew her as Marjorie Morningstar.

She opened her purse to put in a fresh pack of cigarettes; and there was the letter, bulky and depressing. She didn't want to drag the lugubrious document around with her; not to rehearsal, certainly, where she had to appear gay and fresh. She thought of the old rosewood box. It was tucked away on an inconvenient high shelf, but it did lock, and she still had the key somewhere. She found the key, climbed on a chair, and got the box down.

It was covered with dust and it opened with a creak. It was so full of old junk that the papers popped up when she raised the lid. Every year or so she glanced through the contents of the box. The process was growing less and less amusing, and she had often thought she would burn it all and

throw the box away. The security precautions she took against her mother's inquisitiveness were second nature now. Mrs. Morgenstern still poked around in the girl's room, but she hadn't found anything interesting since her nineteenth year, even in the waste-basket.

Marjorie had to double over the long letter to fit it into the box, and even then she could barely jam down the lid. The first time she tried, a few mementoes slipped out and scattered on the floor: George Drobbs' last letter to her, scuffed and yellowing; a frantic, drunken, adoring letter Wally had once written to her; a brownish clipping from the Hunter newspaper containing Helen Johannsen's glowing write-up of her "Mikado" performance; a charming but somewhat too ribald poem Noel had scrawled on the back of a menu, in the form of an acrostic on the name Marjorie Morningstar; a picture of herself with Wally Wronken taken at his graduation.

Stuffing all the papers back in the box, she managed at last to get it locked. She put it up on the shelf and blocked it from view with a couple of hat-boxes. Then she washed the dust of the old box full of old sad secrets—and one new sad secret—from her hands and went to the rehearsal.

Noel's letter probably would have interested Marjorie's mother:

Marjorie, my love:

I am full of dutch courage, having just come back from an all-night drunk with my old boon companion, Ferdie Platt. But there is nothing alcoholic about what I'm going to say to you. In fact, to make sure there isn't, I won't mail this letter until this morning. I've got so much to say that I may fall asleep before I finish it. But I doubt that. I've never felt more wide awake, nor more completely in possession of my faculties, nor more clear-seeing.

It's hard to know where to begin, but one place is as good as another. So let's begin

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A Gift for AUNT HARRIET

IT wasn't often that Martin's secretary confided to him much about her personal life. He knew, of course, of the husband ill in the hospital, and the little girl, and that Alyce Hoffman didn't have an easy time of it, but that was about all he knew.

He was surprised, therefore, and oddly touched when she unwrapped the doll she had bought the little girl for Christmas and showed it to him.

"Her old one's arm is broken and the paint on its face is all cracked," Alyce said, fingering the cotton dress on the doll with her too-thin hand. "I probably should have had it fixed up, but these were on sale, so I splurged."

She lifted the rather ordinary, middle-sized doll from the box she had unwrapped and held it up, her thin cheeks and dark eyes brighter than usual. "It's got a nice face, don't you think, for an inexpensive doll?" she asked a little anxiously.

Martin thought fleetingly of the beautiful baby doll his wife, Janet, had bought for her favorite niece. Janet had said, when she had brought it home from the shop, "This is the kind of doll I'm going to buy our little girl, Marty, when we have one."

She had put her cheek against the cheek of the doll. "Look," she said, "it's just like a real baby."

He didn't know much about dolls, but even he could see the difference between Janet's purchase and the doll his secretary was displaying.

He said, "Looks like a nice doll to me. Not that I'm much of an expert, having generally got a dog or a baseball mitt for my Christmas present when I was a boy."

Alyce Hoffman smiled and put the doll carefully back in the box, tucking in the tissue-paper around it. "Claudette loves dolls," she said.

Martin might never have thought about the doll again if a client, Mrs. Johns, hadn't called and said her son would be home over the holidays and she wanted him to see her house plans. Could Martin bring them over some evening?

"Two days before Christmas and she simply has to have those drawings," he said to Alyce. "Are the drawings still at your apartment?"

His secretary nodded. "I could bring them down tomorrow," she said. "I'm all through numbering them." She took work home sometimes when Martin was pressed, in order to earn overtime.

"I might as well give you a ride home from work and pick the drawings up at the same time," Martin said.

The Hoffmans' apartment was only about 10 blocks out of his way, and the lift would give her a little extra time with the youngster.

Claudette Hoffman was such a sober little five-year-old that Martin was at a loss to know what to talk to her about as he waited for her mother to get the portfolio of drawings from the other room. "What's Santa Claus going to bring you for Christmas, Claudette?" he asked finally.

"A doll," she said, looking up at him with round, brown eyes. "Not a big doll, though. Mommy says Santa's short of big dolls this year." She said it matter-of-factly.

Martin's throat ached suddenly. A little girl like Claudette ought to have a house and a yard, not be cooped up in a two-room apartment.

Alyce came back with the drawings then, so he swallowed his thoughts and emotion.

At dinner he told Janet about the doll Alyce Hoffman had bought. "There was nothing wrong with it, I suppose," he said, "but it seemed so ordinary. It seems a shame, a nice woman like that, having to scrimp all the time."

Janet smiled tenderly at him from across the table. "I think I'd better get you one of those tough-skinned, glamorous gals for a secretary, so you won't be worrying about her."

She poured him a cup of coffee and handed it to him. "Why don't you give Alyce a cheque for Christmas this year, instead of that purse I picked out, and she could buy Claudette a better doll?"

"She wouldn't spend the cheque that way," Martin said. He took the cup and saucer from her and set it down beside his plate. "Besides, the company gives all the secretaries a Christmas cheque. That's why I make my gift to Alyce personal."

"Well, why don't you give Alyce a doll like that one I bought?"

Martin grinned at her. "That's what I hoped you'd say. It'll make an extra dent in the Christmas fund, but I'll do it. We'll give her the purse and the doll."

"Bergeson's might not deliver it in time, though, if you order it by telephone," Janet said. "You'd better pick it up yourself and give it to Alyce tomorrow, before she leaves work."

"I'll pick it up," Martin said, "but I won't give it to her at the office; I'll just give her the purse, the way I'd planned. Then on Christmas Day I'll run over with the doll, before they go out to visit George at the hospital. They always go in the

afternoon, and Claudette might want to take the doll along."

Martin ended up by buying the most magnificent doll Bergeson's toy-store had. "Christmas comes but once a year," he quoted to Janet when he brought it home. The doll had beautiful silken braids and delicately tinted cheeks; a complete wardrobe went with it.

Christmas Day he went to church with Janet and then came back to the house to get the doll. No new snow had fallen for Christmas, but the church on the corner was chiming carols and nearly all the houses had wreaths on their doors. Some of them had picture windows with a tree lit up behind the window.

It was going to be fun presenting that doll, he told himself. Janet couldn't go along because they had guests coming for four o'clock dinner and she was up to her ears in kitchen activities. But she had gift-wrapped the doll for him and it was lying on the hall table.

He was almost out the door when Janet stopped him, calling out from the kitchen. "I almost forgot about Aunt Harriet," she said.

"Forgot her?" Martin asked. Janet looked apologetic. "I forgot to send her a gift, a card, or anything. You'll just have to run over there with a plant or something after you've been to the Hoffmans."

"A plant? Where on earth would I get a plant on Christmas Day?"

"There's that florist place in the hotel," Janet said. "It's always open. See if it is, anyway."

"I'll try," Martin said. Janet had such hordes of relatives and she tried to remember every one.

The florist shop wasn't open, but the hotel clerk had a key and Martin persuaded him to go in and get a dozen yellow roses and wrap them.

Martin thrust the box with the doll in it, and the sheaf of roses, both under his arm as he got out of his car in front of the apartment-house where the Hoffmans lived. He couldn't leave the roses in the car because they might freeze in this chilly weather.

His secretary looked a little surprised at seeing him in front of her door on Christmas Day when she answered his ring. But she invited him in, and Martin accepted.

The tiny apartment seemed more drab than ever, in spite of the small tree set on top of Alyce's desk, and the paper Santa Claus dangling from a centre light-fixture, and Claudette's hand-made red and green paper chains strung across the room.

Alyce had her hat on. "We were just getting ready to go out to the hospital to see George," she said. "The bus goes at two."

It was one-thirty, Martin saw by his wrist-watch. Claudette would still have time to open the package and at least see the doll before they had to leave for the bus. He started to shift the doll from under his arm to his other hand.

Before he had time to hand the doll to Alyce, however, Claudette came up to him carrying the doll her mother had bought at the bargain counter. "Please be very quiet," she told Martin gravely, "because my baby's having her nap. Look"—she pointed at the doll's eyelids, which were shut fast—"she has eyes that open and close." Claudette's own little face had a look of utter bliss as she cradled the doll in her arms.

"She's brand new," she added in a whisper, "and she has all her legs and arms. I got her for Christmas. Isn't she beautiful?"

Martin, standing awkwardly on

Claudette's little face wore an expression of utter bliss as she cradled her new doll in her arms.

the little rug inside the front door, his two Christmas packages under his arm, watched the little girl for a few minutes.

"She hasn't had that doll out of her arms since she got it," his secretary said from beside him, in a voice almost as blissful as Claudette's. "She insists on lugging it out to the hospital to show her daddy."

Martin leaned closer to Claudette and pretended to examine the doll's face carefully. "Yes, she's beautiful," he said, as if he had weighed and considered the matter. "In fact, I believe that's about the nicest doll I've ever seen. I bet it was the nicest doll Santa had in his whole pack."

Martin turned to Alyce, holding out the sheaf of roses. "Janet and I meant to send these out to George at the hospital, but, as usual, we were late with the order and the florist wouldn't deliver them. Will you take them to him and wish him a Merry Christmas?"

"Flowers!" Alyce said in pleased surprise. "Men seldom get flowers and George is as crazy about them as I am. Thank you very much, Mr. Breck, and tell your wife Merry Christmas from us, too, won't you?"

"My baby says Merry Christmas, too," Claudette assured him.

Back in his car again, Martin laid the handsomely wrapped gift box containing the doll on the car seat beside him and looked at it quizzically. He wondered just what Janet's Aunt Harriet would say when she got the most beautiful doll in Bergeson's toy-store for Christmas.

(Copyright)

One Big Happy Family

By EDWARD STREETER

AUTHOR OF "FATHER OF THE BRIDE"



THE incoming tide nosed its way inquiringly into dozens of rock-rimmed coves and tiny inlets. It edged up the slopes of the deserted beaches. Over the coves and along the edges of the beaches circled the seagulls and the terns, weaving, swooping, driving against the wind.

Had a gull, more inquisitive than the others, taken an exploratory flight eastward, its sharp eyes would have noted the village of Rock Harbor basking sleepily in the late May sunlight. Only a few people moved along the sidewalks, meeting, stopping for a moment, and passing on. Only a few automobiles stood beside the high kerbs of the main street. In the harbor only a few fishermen's skiffs swung lazily at their moorings.

A closer observer, however—one more used to the ways of men than a seagull—would have noted a certain quiet bustle pervading the town. Men on ladders were busily slapping white paint on the clapboards of ancient houses, and the soft spring breeze carried the sound of hammers.

In front of his shop, Allen Perkins was setting up two long bicycle racks on either side of the entrance. Farther down the street Alexander Kniska, owner of the Starland Theatre, was moodily scraping an inch of accumulated handbills from his display boards, and in the windows of Terrey's General Store, Elwell Terrey and Miss Haskell were arranging the new summer merchandise.

In front of the Town Hall, Clyde Peabody, Chief of Police, sat on a bench in the sun, shaking a collection of pebbles in the cup of his work-hardened hand. Mr. Peabody had a melancholy, patient face not unlike that of an underfed bloodhound. His friend Bartlett White,

the cashier of the First National Bank of Rock Harbor, sat beside him, scratching lines in the dust with a stick.

A truck rattled down the street, a half-load of matched boarding crashing about in the rear. Both men raised a hand in salutation.

"Guess Gus is going to fix up those bathhouses."

"They sure need it all right. I don't see why these summer people stand for 'em—an' pay to use 'em at that."

"People that'll go in water as cold as that'll stand for anything."

Mr. White rose. "Well, I got to be getting back to the bank," he said. His eye wandered down the deserted street. "Twon't be long now before that street'll be so full of automobiles an' bicycles a snake couldn't get through."

"You're telling me!" said Mr. Peabody morosely. "I'm the one that's got to take it in the neck."

"That's right," said Mr. White, removing his hat to rub his thinning hair. "You're the one that's got to take it, all right. I guess we all got to, more or less, though. It's a funny thing—you can't live with 'em an' you can't live without 'em."

"You said something, Bart."

"Well, whether you can or can't, come this time next month they'll be running over your feet three a minute. By the way, you and Emily want to play a little bridge to-night?"

"Sounds all right to me, Bart. I'll speak to her when I go home to dinner. I'll have her give Betty a ring." He watched the cashier gloomily as the latter walked down the street towards the harbor and the bank.

His thoughts were as gloomy as his face, for he realised that the time was rapidly approaching when he would cease to be Clyde Peabody, respected citizen of Rock Harbor, and a member of the school board, and would become merely the chief of police of a fashionable summer colony, a glorified Keystone Cop, a person to be run into by little girls on bicycles, kidded by fuzzy-chinned boys in convertibles, bombarded by foolish questions, and frustrated by a continuous traffic snarl that no one but himself made any effort to unravel.

From the middle of September to the middle of the following June, Mr. Peabody and his fellow townsmen led lives like those of millions of other citizens. They earned a slender but sufficient living at their various occupations. Their wants were few and their pleasures simple—a first-class television set, the movies, an occasional committee meeting at the town hall or a church supper, a business trip to the mainland now and then, and frequent games of after-dinner bridge.

Then on June 16, like a troupe of actors, they donned their various costumes and climbed on to the stage for the annual three-month pageant.

No longer would they be citizens but rather characters, expected to

act out their parts without a let-down, prancing about the stage to be stared at, laughed at, patronised, and generally pushed around by a group of summer people who (quite unconsciously) were also playing roles completely alien to their normal winter lives.

The only difference was that the native troupe was paid for its acting, while the summer group paid handsomely for the privilege of being allowed to appear on the stage at all.

"Didn't that sign say 'Rock Harbor'?" asked Mrs. Hobbs, who was sitting behind the wheel.

"I don't know," said Mr. Hobbs crossly. "How can anybody know where we are if you go past every sign at sixty miles an hour?"

"I was sure it said 'Rock Harbor,'" said Mrs. Hobbs complacently, bringing the car slowly to a halt.

There was a violent disturbance



among the cartons, suitcases, and loose objects that completely filled the rear.

"Well, let's get there; that's all I care," said a female voice. "I'm almost dead."

Mrs. Hobbs backed the car to the road sign. "There. Who's right?" she cried cheerily. "Rock Harbor. Six and a half miles." She swung the car down the road to the left. "I do hope the place is as nice as Retta said it was going to be," she said after a short silence.

"It had better be," said Mr. Hobbs. "For what we're paying for it, it ought to be a castle. Fool idea anyway, renting a house we've never seen in a place we've never been to."

"I'd feel just the way you do, dear, except Retta's got such heavenly taste. And then she warned us, you remember, that none of these seashore houses are pretty. That's why they're so quaint."

Mr. Hobbs grunted.

"And as for its being in a place we've never seen, that's what I like about it. Everyone ought to get out of the old ruts once in a while and try something new. Retta says if people would make more effort to broaden their horizons they wouldn't be running to psychiatrists all the time. And, besides, it isn't really a strange place, Rog. There are loads of Cleveland people here we know, and it's going to be a lot of fun seeing them."

"Why?" said Mr. Hobbs. "It isn't in Cleveland."

"Oh, Rog, you know what I mean. It'll be fun doing things with people we know."

"How's that going to broaden my horizons?" asked Mr. Hobbs.

"Oh, darling," said Mrs. Hobbs soothingly, as one dealing with a difficult child. "You're just tired and cross. Wait till you see—What's the name of the place?"

"Grey Gables," said the voice in the rear. "Let's go."

"How stupid. Of course. Grey Gables. And you know the last thing Retta said was that it's far enough away from Rock Harbor so we'll have privacy and near enough so we can join in things whenever we want. And that little pirates' cove right by the house—Retta says it just makes the place."

"Step on it or let me out," said the voice from the back seat.

"This must be it," said Mrs. Hobbs. "That real estate man said to follow this road for eight and six-tenths miles and Grey Gables would be the fourth house on the left after we passed the pond."

"I'm afraid you're right," said Mr. Hobbs.

A plump, freckled face, framed with dishevelled yellow hair, emerged from the bundles and boxes in the rear of the car. It was the face of a cherub, a face that still reflected the merry innocence of youth but also gave indications of a more earthly beauty in the offing.

"Good heavens, Pop. Don't tell me we're going to live out in this wilderness. I thought we came here to have some fun."

It was a very large, rambling, two-story house, surrounded on three sides by a deep porch, which, in the fading light, gave the whole lower floor a cavernous look. Above the porch rose an amazing series of corner bays and gables, joined together by a complex system of scrollwork.

Its massive bulk stood in the middle of a treeless lawn in which the crab grass struggled for supremacy with the weeds. Along its edges, waiting to move in at the slightest encouragement, were acres of bayberry and huckleberry bushes.

At the rear of the house the lawn continued to the edge of what appeared to be a bluff, and beyond that was the flat, grey sea. A dense fog was rolling in over the water. Its wings had already reached the land on either side, so that Grey Gables appeared to be standing in

the middle of a ghostly amphitheatre.

"Did you ever see anything so ducky in your life?" cried Mrs. Hobbs.

Mr. Hobbs looked at her with an astonishment that time would never completely extinguish. "Ducky" was not the word he would have chosen to describe Grey Gables. To him it was more reminiscent of an abandoned hotel—long abandoned and for sinister reasons.

Mrs. Hobbs gave a delighted squeal. "There's the pirates' cove. Look, Kate. Remember Aunt Retta telling us about it. Imagine the fun you can have there."

"Doing what?" asked Kate glumly. Like her father, she had also been staring round in dismay.

The fog suddenly blotted out the sea. Below them, to the right, Mr. Hobbs made out the blurred outlines of a sandy cove, protected at its outer edges by jagged rocks.

"Everybody take something," he said. "Don't just go off and leave everything to me." He was too late. Both Mrs. Hobbs and Kate had already disappeared into the house, empty-handed.

The front door creaked. As far as Mr. Hobbs was concerned, it was just what a front door should have done in a place like this. Had a bat flown past his ear, he would not have been surprised.

Mrs. Hobbs' voice came to him out of the gloom.

"There's a project for you, darling. Your first project. Oiling the front door. My, you're going to have fun pattering around this dear old place."

Mr. Hobbs felt as if he was entering a vast tomb. He slapped at the walls on either side of the door.

"I can't seem to find the switch," he said to no one in particular.

Through the darkness he saw a round grey object, apparently suspended from the ceiling in the middle of the room. He stumbled towards it, half expecting that it would turn out to be a snake. It was an electric-light bulb, dangling





naked and unadorned from the end of a cord.

"I'll be blown," he muttered as he switched on the light.

"I know," said Mrs. Hobbs. "We're so lucky to have electricity. Retta says a lot of the houses farther out have no conveniences at all."

Mr. Hobbs looked about him and shuddered slightly. He was in a large room, the walls and ceiling of which were lined with matched boarding, stained a dark brown and varnished. In the centre was a table, littered with last year's magazines, its legs connected with some kind of basketwork. Scattered about were several armchairs, all from the same basket factory. They had a sprung look, as if they had been frozen in the act of collapsing.

In a corner a pile of green wooden chairs had been nested, one into the other. A chintz-covered sofa, at one end of which some heavy body had created a kind of bucket seat, completed the furnishings, unless one included a number of paintings, which gave evidence of having been the summer work of a former tenant who hadn't dabbled much in paints up to that time.

Mrs. Hobbs was struggling with a french door. Its bottom appeared to be nailed to the floor. The top flailed back and forth with shattering crashes.

"It seems to be stuck," she said. "The view must be enchanting though, when the sun's out."

Mr. Hobbs pushed open a swinging door at the back of the living-room. A stale odor of drains came forth through the twilight to greet him. "This must be the kitchen," he said.

"It's going to be such fun just to be by ourselves and have a chance to make everything cosy," said Mrs. Hobbs. Again Mr. Hobbs looked at her with unbelieving eyes.

Kate was lying on the broken sofa. "I knew this was going to be awful," she said. "But I didn't think it was going to be as awful as this. What's anybody going to do in a place like this?"

"Now, Kate, you just stop that. This is your father's vacation. He's come down here for a rest and relaxation. You'll find plenty to do," Kate sniffed.

"There's no water," said Mr. Hobbs from the kitchen.

"Oh, dear, don't you remember that real-estate man in the village said there wouldn't be any pressure up, but that he'd left directions on the mantelpiece for starting the pump?"

They found the folded paper. Mr. Hobbs took it over to one of the basketwork chairs, turned on a floor lamp, and sat down to read:

"The pump is very simple, and should start easy. Open the pet cock on top of the cyl-

inder. Pour in two teaspoonfuls of gasoline (white—don't use no red). Remove rear plug in head of pump and prime with pint of water. Shut off valve to pressure tanks. Open overflow valve. Adjust setscrew clockwise $1\frac{1}{4}$ turns. Press down hard on foot starter. If engine don't start first time, keep on jamming down on foot starter, then adjust setscrew counter-clockwise as engine warms. Open butterfly valve. Close overflow valve. Open valve to pressure tank. When pressure gauge reaches 50lb., turn off by pressing screwdriver against spark plug and engine head, else you'll blow out the tank."

"I don't like to hurry you, dear," said Mrs. Hobbs, "but couldn't you read that tomorrow? I'd like to get that pump going as quickly as possible so we can get some hot water."

Mr. Hobbs turned the creased, worn paper over and over like a man in a daze.

"Water," he said. "Hot water. I don't know what this guy's talking about. I don't even know where the pump is. I couldn't see to do anything if I found it. I wouldn't know what to do if I could see. We'll

"Did you ever see anything so ducky in your life?" Mrs. Hobbs cried ecstatically, while Kate and Mr. Hobbs stared around them in dismay.

use what's left in the vacuum jug tonight. Tomorrow I'll get some bright young fellow from M.I.T. to come down and make a study of this thing."

"Roger Hobbs, do you mean we're not going to have any hot water tonight?"

"You're not going to have any water, period."

"But do you know what that means? We can't take baths. Why, I've been looking forward to a hot bath for hours."

"Well, I've got to take one," said Kate defiantly. "So that's that."

"Okay with me, but I guess you'll have to take them out of teacups," said Mr. Hobbs gloomily. He replaced the directions on the mantelpiece. "I think I'll see if I can find that bottle. It's somewhere in the back of the car."

"What bottle?" asked Mrs. Hobbs, but he was gone.

That night Mr. Hobbs lay very still in his narrow iron bed. He would have liked to toss and turn, but one might as well try to be restless in a sagging hammock. He dozed, dreaming he had been thrown into a sack and was being

carried away over someone's shoulder, and then woke in a cold sweat.

Outside a hazy moon was trying to pierce the fog. He thought of his comfortable bed at home; of his blue-tiled bathroom, where the water leaped forth from the faucets at any desired temperature, and of his comfortable library with its worn leather chair that fitted every curve of his body.

He thought of the hitherto unrealised comfort and convenience of his life in those already remote days and reached for a sleeping pill. His hand pawed the air. Of course—there was no bedside table. The sleeping pills lay somewhere in a welter of unseen suitcases.

He groaned slightly, hoping to attract Mrs. Hobbs' sympathy, but he knew from her even breathing that she was asleep. His groan was unexpectedly answered by the moan of a foghorn from somewhere in the night.

The fates like to amuse themselves by mixing up the private affairs of unrelated mortals. An excellent example of this type of meddling occurred several months prior to the events chronicled above.

During the early spring, while the islanders were taking inventory of



WEDDING OF THE YEAR IN SYDNEY



BRIDAL GROUP. Mr. and Mrs. Baillieu Myer with bridesmaids (from left) Alice Doughty, Barbara Potter, Sue Carnegie, Rosemary Ashton, and Celia Winter-Irving.



LEFT. Mother of the bridegroom, Mrs. Sidney Baillieu Parbury, arrives with her elder son, Mr. Ken Myer, who is just back from abroad. **ABOVE:** Mr. and Mrs. Philip Parbury were early arrivals at St. Mark's, Darling Point, for the wedding of Baillieu Myer and Sarah Hordern.

THE marriage of Mr. Baillieu Myer and Miss Sarah Hordern has linked two of the most important and wealthy families in Australia. Police-controlled onlookers watched the four hundred fashionably dressed guests arrive at St. Mark's, Darling Point, to attend the wedding.



QUARTET OF GUESTS at the reception, held in the garden of the bride's home at Bellevue Hill, are (from left) Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Clayton, Rod O'Connor, of Tasmania, and Teresa Zalapa.



ARRIVING at St. Mark's are Mr. and Mrs. Noel Vincent. Mrs. Vincent chose a princess-line dress of peacock-hued silk and tiny cap of velvet.



MOTHER OF THE BRIDE. Mrs. Sam Hordern, walks up the steps at St. Mark's, Darling Point, for the wedding of her only daughter, Sarah, with Baillieu Myer, of Toorak.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - December 28, 1955



THE BRIDE ARRIVES. Surrounded by some of the 500 spectators, Sarah Hordern and her father, Mr. Sam Hordern, pause at the church gateway.



UNDER a striped awning, Mr. and Mrs. Baillieu Myer leave St. Mark's after their wedding. Bride wore a strapless gown of heavy white lace, covered with a short satin-collared bolero.

LEAVING for the reception, Baillieu Myer and his bride smile at friends as they drive away from St. Mark's, Darling Point, in a silver-grey Rolls-Royce.



A FLURRY OF LACE AND SILK as the bride, with bridesmaids (from left) Susan Carnegie, Barbara Potter, Celia Winter-Irving, and Rosemary Ashton, leaves the reception marquee to change into her going-away ensemble. Later, guests "chaired" the bride and groom to their car. In late January, Mr. and Mrs. Myer will set off for abroad.

The Woman in the Case

from page 7

Mrs. Tablet. "Can't you possibly dine here, too? Can't you put the editor off? I've made a beautiful casserole!"

She would have, thought Sherrard. He still refused. But he couldn't prevent Malcolm coming along and walking back to the club with him.

Sherrard's old friend Malcolm was very grateful indeed for having been, however unwittingly, introduced by Sherrard to Mrs. Tablet. He said she was just the sort of woman he liked but never met.

As Malcolm listed Cecilia's virtues Sherrard glimpsed as few and almost pathetic his friend's encounters with the opposite sex.

"And but for you we'd never have met!" repeated Malcolm—more than once. "I say, old man, have you anything on your mind?"

Sherrard hastily altered his expression and lied. Malcolm still scrutinised him narrowly.

"I suppose," said he, and paused. The question he was about to put was evidently one of importance to him. "I suppose," he asked, "there's no doubt of Mrs. Tablet's being a widow?"

This time at least Sherrard hadn't to lie.

He didn't like the situation at all. In Cairo he had resolved to let Malcolm go hang; now that they were actually face to face again, Sherrard found the old absurd bond as strong as ever.

Malcolm—the signs were only too obvious—was plodding steadily on towards matrimony; and while it is one thing to let one's flat to a woman one doesn't think shot her husband, it is quite another to see her marry one's oldest friend.

Especially when there hung about the background the peculiarly unattractive figure of Elfin Brown, to whom Mrs. Tablet might or might not be paying blackmail; and to whom Malcolm also might (or might not) be paying blackmail if he married Mrs. Tablet.

It all turned on Cecilia Tablet's integrity. And Sherrard still couldn't make up his mind about it—not even after she'd been, next morning, to see him.

"This is awful of me, isn't it?" said Cecilia at once. "I mean, it isn't fair, is it, coming after a man in his club? But I had to see you alone."

Sitting on the extreme edge of a small, hard chair in the small, cold waiting-room, Mrs. Tablet immediately continued.

"Darling Malcolm's asked me to marry him."

"Congratulations," said Sherrard dryly.

"But I don't think he knows about Matthew."

"I don't either," said Sherrard.

"Well, will you tell him?" asked Mrs. Tablet.

"Why am I involved in this at all?" demanded Sherrard. "Why don't you tell him yourself? What the deuce has it got to do with me?"

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Tablet. "I suppose it hasn't anything to do with you, really, except that but for you we'd never have met. And as for my telling him, though I don't pretend I wouldn't hate it, it wouldn't be fair. I mean," explained Mrs. Tablet honestly, "he'll just believe anything I say."

Sherrard stared at her. He had a wide knowledge of human nature, but he still couldn't make up his mind about Mrs. Tablet. For one thing, it was so obviously sensible not to risk anything coming to light later.

"Will you tell me," he said abruptly, "why you house that odious creature Miss Brown?"

"Oh, don't you like her either?" said Mrs. Tablet. "Of course, it's because she saved

my life. She did, you know; just as much as if I'd been stuck on a cliff and she came over for me on a rope." (Sherrard absolutely started. A rope! What a simile!)

"So, naturally," continued Mrs. Tablet, "I'm grateful. And as just then her shop went bankrupt quite finally, and as they didn't seem to want her much in nightclubs, of course it was only fair I should look after her. I must still, in fact," added Mrs. Tablet. "And that's another thing, if you don't mind, to tell Malcolm."

"How much?" asked Sherrard crudely.

"Well, she'd like," said Mrs. Tablet, "five thousand."

"I'll tell him," said Sherrard.

Sherrard telephoned his friend Malcolm that same day, and over dinner told him—all. By a fortunate accident he had found both cutting and typescript of the Tablet case crumpled but still legible in his baggage; he gave them to Malcolm to read. It irritated him extremely (Sherrard was by this time irritated perpetually) to see Malcolm's eyes filled with tears.

"The poor little woman!"

"Quite so," agreed Sherrard. "It would be an unpleasant experience for any of us."

"What she must have suffered—and what a blessing there was a sensible jury!"

"She had good witnesses," said Sherrard. "She had Miss Brown."

"So that's why! Of course," said Malcolm. "Of course, I understand now Cecilia's attitude. Is five thousand enough to look after her?"

"I'm glad you don't say, to keep her quiet," interjected Sherrard.

Malcolm said quietly, "I know my Cecilia. The soul of truth, as the soul of loyalty! And what simplicity as well—seeing, don't you know, no evil! What a happy chap I'll be, if she'll only say she'll have me!"

Okay, thought Sherrard, he's decided; and put a proper warmth into his voice.

"I'm sure she'll have you," he promised. "Propose."

What Malcolm next said was quite appalling. "I suppose you advise me to, old man?"

Sherrard really wouldn't have minded, at that moment, if Mrs. Tablet not only married his old friend Malcolm, but also shot him.

For there is an end to all things, and this was the end of all protective feeling. It wasn't, therefore, from a wide knowledge of human nature, nor from old affection, nor from any opinion of Mrs. Tablet that he now gave his verdict. He gave it out of irritation.

"The sooner the better," said Sherrard.

It took place, the wedding at least as soon as possible, Sherrard performing the offices of best man. Immediately after Cecilia and Malcolm drove to the airport, there to embark on the first leg of their honeymoon in Buenos Aires, and Sherrard returned to his flat.

It was uncommonly pleasant to be home; he felt grateful to Cecilia not only for the obvious care she had lavished on his possessions, but also for her ruthless ejection of Elfin Brown. ("You always said you liked Torquay," pointed out Cecilia, "and it's only fair to let Mr. Sherrard come back...")

At last, after months—so he felt—he could relax; he hoped he wouldn't hear of any shooting accident in Buenos Aires, but in the meantime he was going to relax.

He was half asleep, feet up on the sofa, when the clarion voice of Mrs. Bates sounded.

"Well, sir!" cried Mrs. Bates. "Didn't it all pass off lovely?"

"I gather you approve?"

"Certainly I approve," said Mrs. Bates. "I consider it a marriage made in heaven."

Sherrard hesitated. The die was cast; what was done was done and he accepted responsibility; he still felt, on one point, curious.

"And I gather that you—knew all along?"

Mrs. Bates made no pretence at not understanding him.

"Certainly I knew. Let alone all that in the papers, wasn't my cousin Edie there?"

Sherrard gasped. He remembered now, vaguely, Mrs. Bates saying something of the sort before—about her cousin Edie working for Mrs. Tablet.

"When was your cousin Edie there?"

"At the awful moment," said Mrs. Bates casually.

"When Mrs. Tablet's husband—?"

"That's right," agreed Mrs. Bates. "She goes in, my cousin Edie does, for cocktail parties, 'Ands around and all that. When poor Mr. Tablet made away with 'imself she'd just finished washing up."

"There was nothing of that in the evidence," said Sherrard.

"Well, no, there wasn't," admitted Mrs. Bates. "Seeing all Edie saw and 'eard was just the same as Miss Brown saw and 'eard, where was the sense?"

An 'orrible quarrel, enough to bring 'er to the door, and Mr. Tablet whipping out his gun, and poor Mrs. Tablet trying to get it off 'im, then 'im knocking 'er for six, and bang! The mortal shot. It upset my cousin Edie you wouldn't believe. So she nipped back in the kitchen, and put on 'er fur, and went 'ome."

"I'll be darned," said Sherrard.

"Well, who wants to get mixed up with the police?" inquired Mrs. Bates reasonably.

"I do assure you, though, sir, if it 'adn't been for Miss Brown, able to tell all just as it passed, Edie, I stake my word, would've bin up there in the box giving evidence with the best."

Sherrard was a more conscientious man than he liked to admit.

Old friendships, however outworn, die hard; remembering the radiant faces of Cecilia and Malcolm, reflecting that even millionaires sometimes come to grief, perceiving Elfin Brown still able to make a thundering nuisance of herself—as a result of all these considerations, Sherrard morosely engineered a personal interview with Cousin Edie.

Her tale convinced at every point. Sherrard finished the job by despatching to Buenos Aires a full account of the fact, together with Edie's name and address.

As a final gesture of friendship, it was a worthy one. It was also more final than Sherrard anticipated. For Malcolm's reply was less grateful than indignant; had Sherrard actually still been harboring doubts, demanded Malcolm, of the sweetest little woman who ever breathed?

And as for Elfin Brown, if Sherrard still didn't understand Cecilia's pure, innocent attitude towards her, that was probably, if regrettably, the fault of Sherrard's own ungenerous mind.

Sherrard read the letter through and grinned a trifle wryly. At last, he thought, they've got Edie's address. Providence, by the hand of Sherrard, had at least armed them with that. Sherrard hoped, nonetheless, that the providence of simple millionaires and of thoroughly nice women would in future choose another instrument than himself.

(Copyright)

City Christmas

CHRISTMAS is clamor in the shops and a million children,

Perfumes and toys and the glitter of tinsel and scarlet,

And a fresh salt wind, like a breath of eternity, blowing

Into the traffic-jammed, jumbled, impatient streets.

Christmas is the Salvation Army at night on the pavement.

"Won't you join us," cries the lassie, "in singing this beautiful hymn?"

(She of the childlike voice and the youthful, unpainted face),

While the crowd loiters, cynical, bashful, back by the windows.

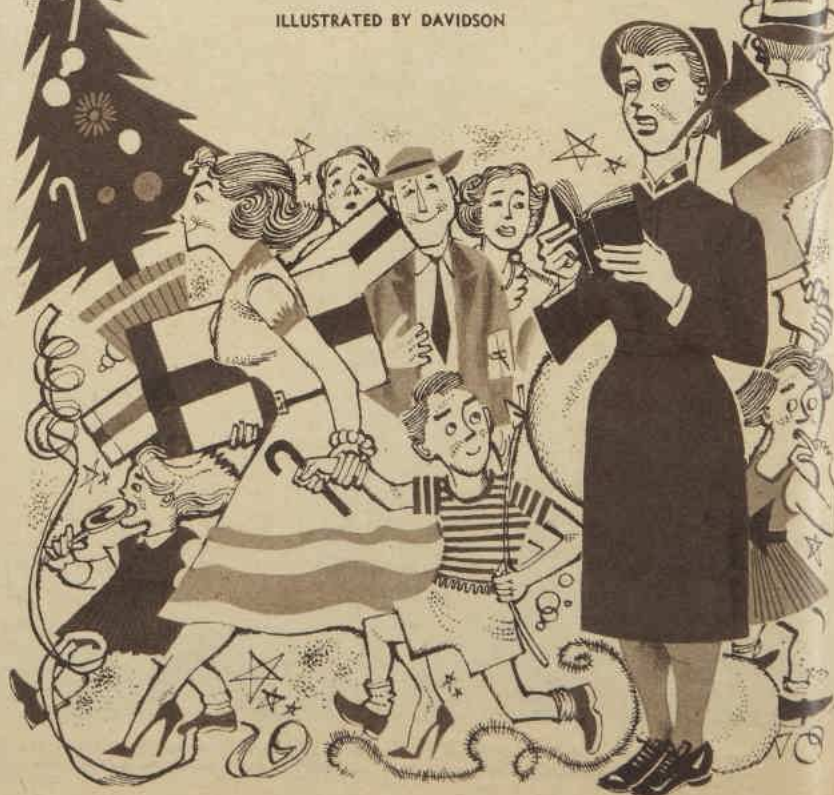
And nobody joins, except one passer-by, who is drunk.

The others, self-consciously smiling, pause for a while and depart,

With sometimes a chink of silver, and an echo, perhaps, in the heart.

—DOROTHY DRAIN

ILLUSTRATED BY DAVIDSON



No more wash-day blues for her



DRIPPING CLOTHES were hanging from the line when Mrs. Rita Gear was told of her win of £5000 in a nation-wide jingle contest. Here, Mrs. Gear, her husband, Fred, and their nine children pose happily for photographer Scott Polkinghorne.

Jingle on soap powder wins £5000 prize for mother of nine

One woman who will never suffer from wash-day blues is Mrs. Rita Gear, of Tipperary, N.S.W. Every washing day she will be reminded of the December day when the dripping clothes hanging on her lines proved to be a £5000 wash.

ON that day six of us in a two-car contingent arrived at her home to tell her that her entry had been selected as the best from 350,000 submitted in a national jingle contest to publicise a soap powder.

We left Sydney on the one-day 500-mile return trip soon after daybreak, drove north to Newcastle, north-west to Gloucester, and on over 13 streams and rough roads to break the good news to Mrs. Gear.

Her seven-word line completing the jingle in the competition to launch a new, big-sized packet of soap powder was worth £5000.

Mrs. Gear was not expecting us.

Two days before, Mr. Norbert Snashall, advertising manager for the company conducting the contest, had rung the Gears' nearest neighbors, the Holstein family, who live four miles away.

Mr. Snashall pretended he was an old family friend, that he would be passing through the district on Sunday, and wondered if the Gears would be at home.

"Oh, yes," the Holsteins told him. "They rarely go out."

"And how many are there in the family now?" Mr. Snashall asked. "It's been many years since I last saw them."

"Nine children," he was told.

Mrs. Gear and her husband were standing in the garden when we arrived.

Mrs. Gear, a tiny, dark-haired woman, with warm brown eyes and deep-olive

skin, looked much too young to be the mother of nine children, the oldest of whom is 20, the youngest 16 months.

Visitors are few and far between at Tipperary, and we were eyed with friendly curiosity.

When Mrs. Gear was told of her win she buried her head in her husband's shoulder and burst into tears.

"No, Fred! No!" she cried. "It must be a joke. I've never been so lucky in my life."

"We've already had our Christmas present," she

money? I don't know yet. This has come as such a shock. But one thing is certain. I'm not going to rush out and spend it. I must think about it first. Five thousand pounds can go a long way towards helping make our future secure. Whatever way I decide to use it, it must be to benefit the whole family—not just me."

Mr. Gear heard the news without a sign of emotion.

"My first thought when I saw the photographer's camera," he told us later, "was that the Teleword competition had finished, and it couldn't be that."

Mrs. Gear was an ardent crossword fan before she was married, and was a regular entrant in the Sydney Daily Telegraph's Teleword competitions.

"She went very close on several occasions," Mr. Gear said.

Just then, one of their sons came out into the garden on his way to the milking-shed, on top of the hill.



GEAR FARMHOUSE nestles at the foot of Mt. Tipperary. The family moved there from Sydney about four years ago.



MRS. RITA GEAR cries on her husband's shoulder when Mr. Norbert Snashall, advertising manager of the company which conducted the competition, tells her of her win.

"Hey, Robert," his father called to him, "Mum has won £5000."

Robert's face broke into a grin, and his brown eyes widened. In a flash he had darted back inside the comfortable little farmhouse to break the news to his brothers and sisters.

A minute later the children came running from all directions, shouting their delight, and crowding round their starry-eyed mother.

There were Fred, 20, John, 18, Robert, 16, Peter, 13, Rita, 11, Kenneth, 10, Lucy, 6,

Wendy, 4, and Maeva, 16 months.

Then they went back to work; Fred, John, and Robert to milk the cows, Peter to chop the wood, and Rita to mind the baby.

The Gears were married 21 years ago. They spent most of their early married life in Sydney, where Mr. Gear was a machinist.

Four years ago, when the boys were old enough to help, they shifted to the little farmhouse which nestles at the foot of Mt. Tipperary.

"Quite often, when the rain has been exceptionally heavy," Mrs. Gear said, "the creeks flood and we are cut off completely for days."

"I always have to be sure I have enough food stored away for these emergencies," she said in her soft, pleasant voice.

On December 22 the Gears will come to Sydney for a few days as guests of the Australian Amateur Hour, and will be presented with the £5000.

"I must send a telegram to my mother," Mrs. Gear said.

"She and my sister and her three children are coming up from Sydney to spend Christmas Day with us."

Mrs. Gear's father, who came from the West Indies as a boy, died when Mrs. Gear

was two. Her mother is an Australian.

Mrs. Gear spends most of her time working in the home.

"The boys help their father round the farm, and I look after the children, cook, clean, sew, and, of course, do the washing," she said with a smile.

"I don't want to leave Tipperary," she added. "I've been so happy here. The farm is in a beautiful spot surrounded by high hills, we have plenty of fresh farm food, and it is a healthy life for the children."

As we drove away we looked back and saw the whole family climbing into their car.

With a wave of arms and legs, happy faces disappeared in the opposite direction, as the Gears set off to spread the news to their neighbors.

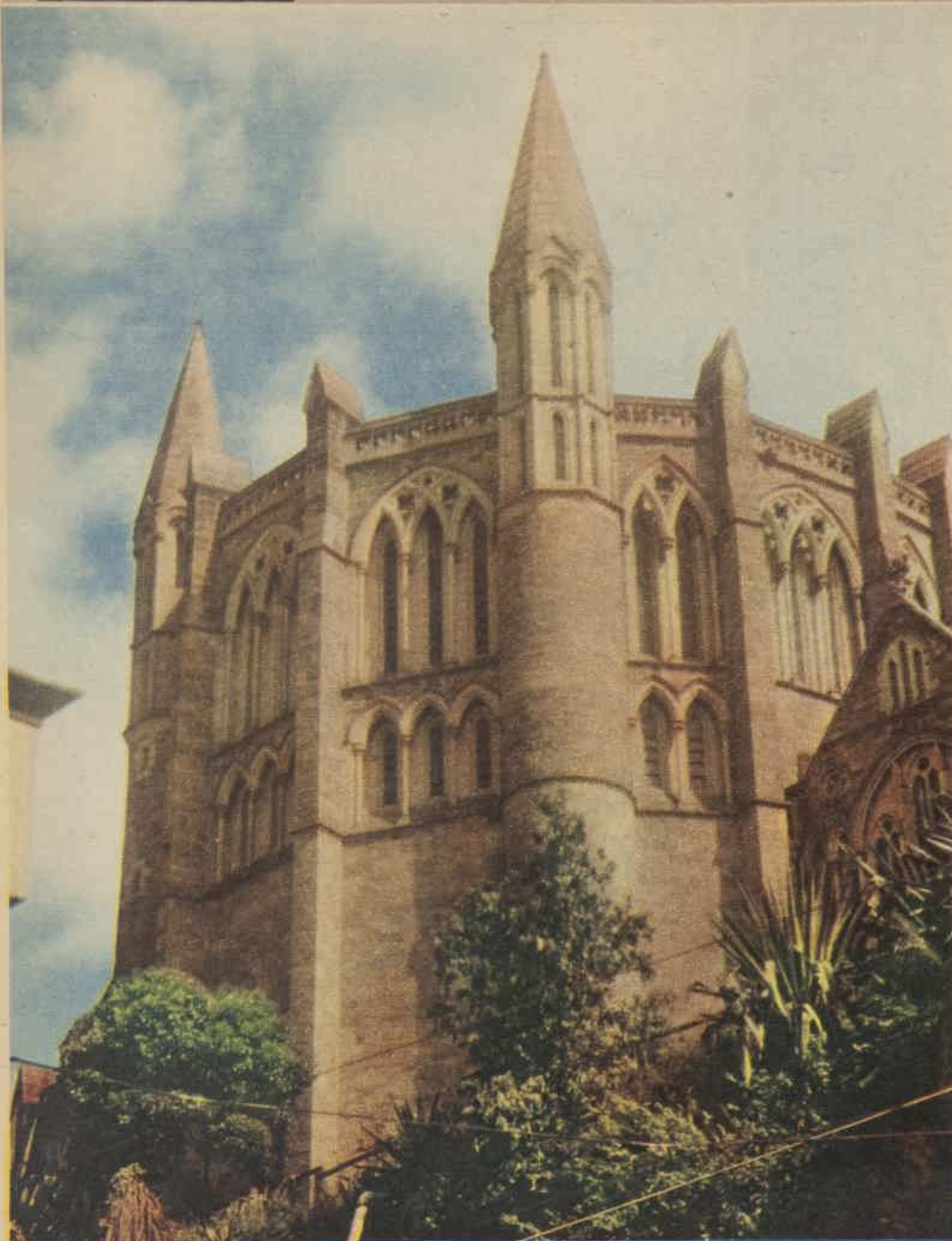
A few miles away at Dyer's Crossing we stopped our journey to call on Mrs. Gear's grocers, Mr. Adam Murray and his son, Harry.

They won £200 for being the grocer nominated on Mrs. Gear's entry form.

"Best news I've heard for a long time," Harry Murray said, when we told him of Mrs. Gear's win.

"She is my biggest customer, and you couldn't have chosen a nicer person."

● On Christmas Day church bells will summon worshippers to hear again Christ's message of peace and goodwill. Pictures on these pages show some of the historic churches of Australia.

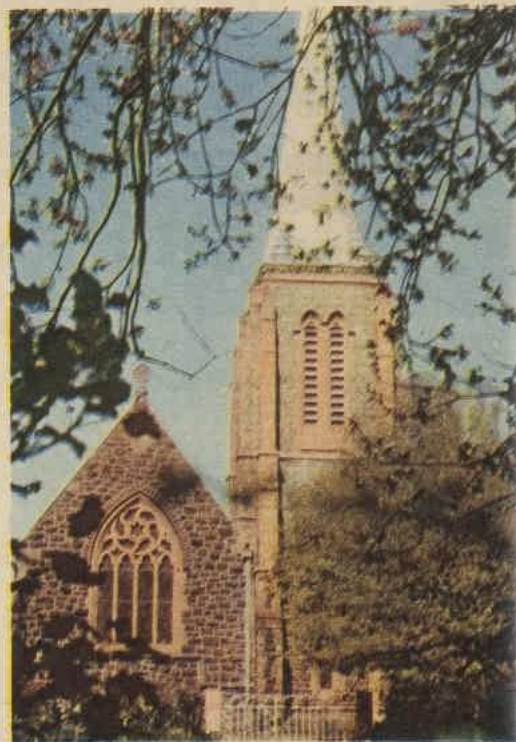
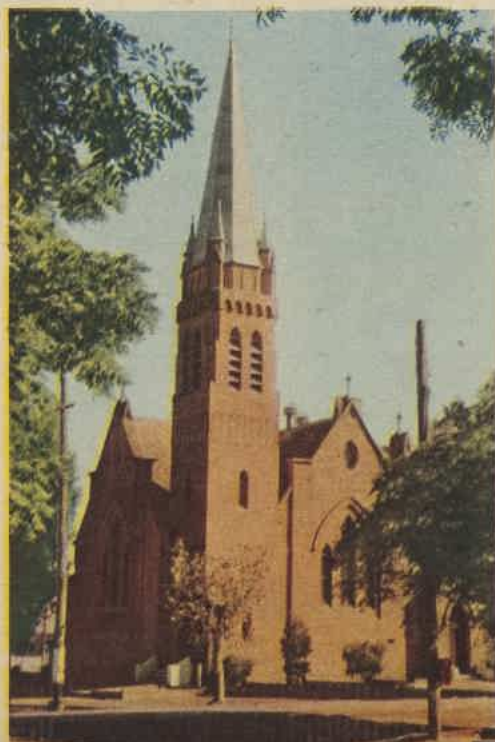


ST. JOHN'S Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane, is a superb re-creation of 13th-century Gothic. The Duke of York (later George V) laid the first stone in 1901.

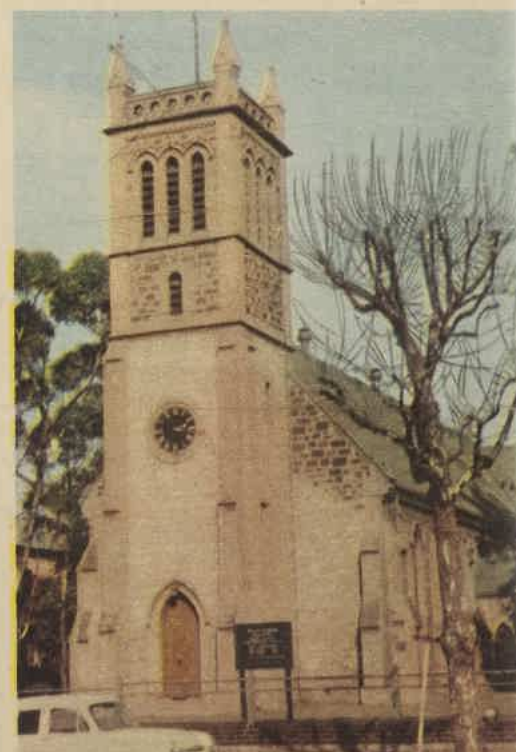


ST. MARY'S Anglican church, Mirboo North, Vic. (above). A Christmas congregation poses here.

NARRANDERA Presbyterian Church, N.S.W. (right). The foundation stone was laid in 1907.



ST. MARY'S IN THE FIELD Church of England, Hagley, Tasmania, stands in the paddocks of a rich farming district. The church was consecrated in 1871.



HOLY TRINITY Church of England, Adelaide, is 117 years old. The city's surveyor, Colonel Light, chose the site. Its fine cedar woodwork is valued at £5000.

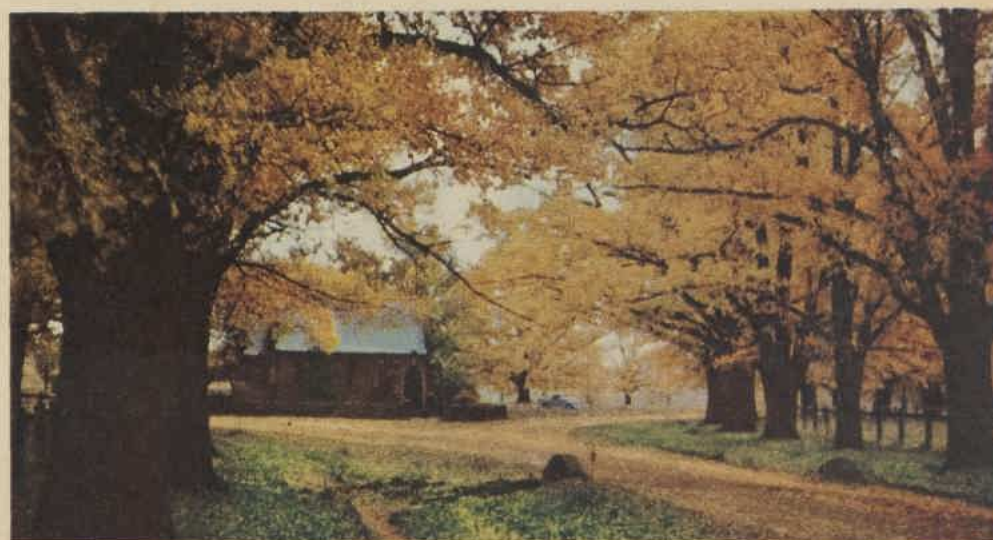


CHURCH OF ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR, Penrith, N.S.W. (above), is an old State landmark. The foundation stone was laid in 1837, the church opened in 1839.



CHURCH of Hermannsburg Mission (above), 70 miles west of Alice Springs, built by Lutheran missionaries.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER cathedral (right), Geraldton, W.A., designed by Monsignor Hawes, was opened in 1938.



GOSTWYCK CHAPEL, Uralla, N.S.W., stands in the grounds of the property of the late Major C. C. Dangar, which now belongs to his two daughters, Mrs. W. Grant Giblin and Mrs. Bertram Wright. It was built by Major Dangar's widow (now Mrs. H. K. Gordon) as a memorial to him and dedicated on December 16, 1921.



PRIZE WINNERS IN MIGHTY SIZE RINSO JINGLE CONTEST

1st PRIZE £5000—Mrs. Rita Gear, Ormsby Glen Tipperary, via Krambach, N.S.W.

2nd PRIZE £1000—Miss J. Hyland, 34 Hopkins St. East, Moonah, Tasmania.

300 Prize Winners of 55 Cash Vouchers for Mighty Size Xmas Hampers.

- Aichin, Mrs. M. 90 Benjamin St., Sunshine, Vic. 163
The Promenade, Sans Souci, N.S.W.
Allen, Jean, "Avon," Wallumbilla, Qld.
Andrews, Mrs. H. Thornton, N.S.W.
Andrews, Mrs. H. M. 73
Curtis Ave., Ashford, N.S.W.
Annett, Mrs. M. Box 179, Hamilton, Vic.
Ashcroft, Mrs. R. N. 51
Middle St., Ascot Vale, Vic.
Aylett, Mrs. J. E. 94 First Ave., Mt. Lawley, W.A.
Ayling, Mrs. J. M. 15
Acacia Ave., Glenrie, S.A.
Bailey, E. G. 60, Dorrin, W.A. Baker, N.S.W.
Baldwin, Mrs. E. F. 341
Barr St., Nth. Broken Hill, N.S.W.
Barrell, Mrs. J. J. Box 15, Minnipa, S.A.
Barrett, Mrs. J. H. 60, Gallipoli Pde., Pascoe Vale St., Vic.
Barrett, Mrs. W. Stanhope, Vic.
Barwick, Mrs. M. Private Bag, Candeo, N.S.W.
Bath, Mrs. A. 18
Manson St., Swan View, W.A. Bean, Mrs. R. W. 40, Brisbane St., Morwell, Vic.
Beaumont, Mrs. R. Lower Mangrove, N.S.W.
Beavis, H. C. 4, Fairfield St., Dulwich Hill, N.S.W.
Belcher, Mrs. H. R. 24, Belvedere St., Belmont, W.A.
Bennett, Mrs. P. A. 27, Grifflenden Rd., Flinders Park, S.A.
Bentley, T. C. Richmond, Qld.
Bevan, Mrs. F. L. c/o P.O. Glasshouse Mountains, Qld.
Biggall, J. H. Box 20, Wagon, W.A.
Bishop, Mrs. M. J. 19, Landsdowne Rd., East St. Kilda, Vic.
Bockerman, Mrs. N. 103 Wigram St., Harris Park, N.S.W.
Bonnyton, Mrs. I. Y. 30, Brixton, N.S.W.
Booth, Mrs. R. Meekatharra, S.A.
Bourne, Mrs. B. "Table Top," Delungra, N.S.W.
Bourne, Mrs. D. 3, Bennett St., Thornton, S.A.
Buckley, Mrs. A. South St., Pascoe Vale, Vic.
Bull, Norma, 42, Warrigal Rd., Surrey Hills, Vic.
Brazenale, Mrs. K. Deloraine, Tas.
Caird, Mrs. J. Mount William Station, Wailuara, Vic.
Carhill, Mrs. L. E. Goodmangar, via Lismore, N.S.W.
Cassom, Mrs. M. 144 Gloucester Rd., Hurstville, N.S.W.
Cawsey, Mrs. J. 26 Bedford St., Willoughby, N.S.W.
Cathcart, Mrs. and Mrs. E. R.A.P. East Sale, Vic.
Chambers, Mrs. R. Box 20, Julia Creek, Qld.
Chapman, Mrs. D. 62, Braye St., Mayfield, N.S.W.
Chapple, Mrs. A. D. Carrington St., Robynville, Vic.
Charlton, Mrs. M. G. Newman St., St. Marys, N.S.W.
Chawlin, Mrs. R. Henrietta, via Burnie, Tas.
Chetham, Mrs. G. Ripplebrook, via Drouin, Vic.
Christmas, H. 32, Ferris St., Gulliver, Towanville, Qld.
Chung, Mrs. M. "Corralin Lodge," White Hills, Private Bag 183, Launceston, Tas.
Clifford, Mrs. V. Private Bag, Donald, Vic.
Cochrane, Mrs. D. 11, McHugh St., Sydney, N.S.W.
Coddie, A. "Baselia," Suntop, via Wellington, N.S.W.
Cody, Mrs. S. 377 Logan Rd., Greenough, S.A.
Cogan, Mrs. E. 1, Ashburn, S.A.
Collard, Mrs. A. W. 22 Kirkwood St., Eaglehawk, Bendigo, Vic.
Colwell, Mrs. R. Rembridge, via Somerville, Vic.
Connor, Mrs. M. 159
Flinders St., Toowoomba, Qld.
Cook, Mrs. E. 1 Churchill Ave., Bendigo, Vic.
Contello, Mrs. D. J. 3 Garnet Leary Ave., Black Rock, Vic.
Covey, Mrs. M. A. 30
Geelong St., East, Bendigo, Qld.
Cowan, Mrs. D. P. R.M.B. 49
Hannam Vale, North Coast, N.S.W.
Covell, Jean, Box 80, Esperance, W.A.
Cranich, V. 3, Portdown St., Salisbury, Brisbane, Qld.
Crichton, Mrs. A. J. "Rockwood Estate," P.O. Box 327, Albany, N.S.W.
Crowle, K. V. Para St., Henmark, S.A.
Cunningham, Mrs. M. J. 3
Larch St., Blackburn, Vic.
Dalglish, Mrs. A. Lot 12, Murphy St., Oakleigh, Vic.
Daniel, Gwen, Mary St., Blackstone, Qld.
Danby, John, 7 Field St., Mt. Lawley, Perth, W.A.
Davis, Mrs. W. 31 Eleanor St., Camp Hill, Brisbane, Qld.
Deane, Mrs. D. 34, Brookvale Ave., Brookvale, N.S.W.
Dawe, Mrs. C. 6 Wilson St., Prospect, S.A.
Dedman, Mrs. C. c/o Mrs. L. Thompson, Steers St., Nth. Collic, W.A.
Dedman, Margaret, Steers St., Nth. Collic, W.A.
Della, Belle, Duranville, W.A.
Dellors, Mrs. E. K. 24
Pintonia St., Hughesdale, Vic.
Douch, Mrs. C. Eden St., Bega, N.S.W.
Dow, Mrs. S. 10, King St., Mackay, Qld.
Duckworth, W. St. Chisholm Ave., Belmont, N.S.W.
Duddy, Mrs. C. 101 Norman Cres., Norman Park, Brisbane, Qld.
Duncan, Mrs. J. c/o Mrs. P. Duncan, 6 Benconlee Ave., West Hyde, N.S.W.
Eagleton, Mrs. R. D. Cundie Flat, via Bundock, N.S.W.
Edmonds, Mrs. A. M. 61 Marine Pde., Elwood, Vic.
Edwards, R. 39
Pearse St., Cottesloe, W.A.
Edwards, Miss G. Bringa, Collic, N.S.W.
Elliot, Mrs. G. E. Cyril St., Coorparoo, Brisbane, Qld.
Elliott, R. H. 9 Storey Rd., East Preston, Vic.
Farrar, Mrs. L. K. 41 Goulburn St., Yarraville, Vic.
Fetherston, Mrs. P. 32 Skew St., Sherwood, Qld.
Fitzgibbon, Mrs. J. 10, Rockhampton, Qld.
Ford, Mrs. A. K. 16 Pearse St., North Fremantle, W.A.
Fowler, S. 61 Sandgate Rd., Bald Hills, Qld.
Francis, Mrs. M. 52, Seaside Rd., Cronulla, N.S.W.
Fulton, Mrs. H. H. Private Bag 33, Drummond, Vic.
Gale, A. "Hadley Wood," Kalgan River, Albany, W.A.
Gaake, Mrs. M. E. 28 Edmond St., Toowoomba, Qld.
Gillard, G. 128 Kianawah Rd., Lindrum, Bris., Qld.
Gilmore, H. 29, Pechonia Rd., N.S.W.
Golder, Mrs. J. M. 16 Black St., Mont Albert, Vic.
Goodman, Mrs. J. 85 Nelson Rd., Box Hill, Vic.
Gordon, Mrs. P. 30 Barnardoy Rd., Vallaure North, Vic.
Grady, Miss, Box 36, P.O. Parkes, N.S.W.
Griffiths, Mrs. C. 38 Hawson Ave., North Plympton, S.A.
Grimsley, Mrs. W. E. 51 Elliott Ave., Carnegie, Vic.
Hale, Mrs. L. 31 Rose St., Eagle Junction, Qld.
Haley, Mrs. M. 110 Rose Terrace, Wayville, S.A.
Hall, Mrs. E. 10 Kessell Ave., Homebush West, N.S.W.
Halls, Mrs. E. 278 Charles St., North Perth, W.A.
Hanley, Mrs. R. G. 51 Holmsdale Rd., West Midland, W.A.
Harris, J. 34 Scott St., Crooklyn, N.S.W.
Harvey, Mrs. G. 10 Loftus St., Concord, N.S.W.
Hawter, Mrs. F. A. 22 Park Rd., Mt. Lawley, W.A.
Heagney, Miss M. 1216 Howatt St., Ballarat, Vic.
Herbertson, Mrs. F. Private Bag 7, Portland, Vic.
Hewson, Miss D. E. "Glarus," Glen Alvie, Vic.
Hill, Mrs. F. A. 19 Reginald St., Camberley, S.A.
Hill, Miss M. 3 Gladstone St., Kempey, N.S.W.
Hills, Mr. W. J. Woodland, Carag Carag, Vic.
Hinkler, R. D. 68 Gladys St., Innisfail, Qld.
Holand, Mrs. C. 1, Mayfield Ave., Malvern, Vic.
Holapier, Mrs. J. 35 Rowell St., Zillmere, Bris., Qld.
Hood, K. J. Box 14, Brim, Vic.
Hochstet, Mrs. K. Arthur St., Wood Point, Qld.
Hodgson, Mrs. I. 1, Shadforth, via Orange, N.S.W.
Huggett, Mrs. E. 15 Somerville Ave., Lismore, N.S.W.
Hughes, Mrs. S. 80 Dalrymple St., Cessnock, N.S.W.
Hutchinson, Mrs. Q. C. Coniston, via Merrywinebone, N.S.W.
Ivers, Mrs. B. E. 251 Princes Hwy., Sutherland, N.S.W.
Irwin, Mrs. H. 12 Patrick St., Hurstville, N.S.W.
Johnson, M. 50 Lewis St., Kalgoolie, W.A.
Jones, Mrs. P. R. 23 Young St., Harvey, W.A.
Jones, A. R. 80, Golf House, Kalgoolie, W.A.
Jones, Mrs. S. 46 Mariborough St., Henley Beach, S.A.
James, Mrs. M. Eochie St., Peak Hill, N.S.W.
Jackson, Mrs. N. A. 20 Perroux St., Armstrong Estate, Townsville, Qld.
Jard, Mrs. R. 38 Malvern St., Lithgow, N.S.W.
Jenkins, Mrs. D. L. 21 May St., Bentleigh, Melb., Vic.
Johnson, Mrs. M. 270 Newmarket Rd., Bris., Qld.
Jeffrey, Mrs. A. N. 57 Fletcher Ave., Moomba, Tas.
Johnsen, L. M. 27 Greens Rd., Camp Hill, Bris., Qld.
Jones, M. 78 Annandale St., Annandale, N.S.W.
Kavanagh, P. J. 22 Crystal St., Sylvania Hills, Sydney, N.S.W.
Kearns, Mr. J. 46 Baan Baan St., Dapto, N.S.W.
Kereopa, Mrs. L. 72 Lennox Ave., Sydney, N.S.W.
Kettley, Mrs. R. 38 Lookout St., Thirloom, N.S.W.
King, Mrs. H. 8761 Curlew St., Bondi, N.S.W.
King, Mrs. R. B. 177 Buck St., Broken Hill, N.S.W.
Kowalski, Mrs. V. 342 Enoggera Rd., Newmarket, Bris., Qld.
Knevit, Mrs. W. 58 Cummins Lane, Broken Hill, N.S.W.
Knockey, Mrs. R. P. 146 Elnor Ave., Epsom Park, Adelaide, S.A.
Krahnert, Mrs. B. 9 Urquhart St., Hawthorn, Vic.
Laidler, Mrs. F. 63 Coolhah St., Leeton, N.S.W.
Larsen, Mrs. H. A. Dakabin, North Coast Line, Qld.
Latt, Mrs. M. 14, Victoria Ave., St. Morris, S.A.
Lathbury, Mrs. A. 83 Liverpool Rd., Summer Hill, N.S.W.
Lawrence, Mrs. G. Cowper St., Temerloh, N.S.W.
Le Ban, Mrs. C. 14, Redcliffe, Chatham St., Margate, Redcliffe, Qld.
Leader, Joyce, Albany Highway, Maddington, W.A.
Leibinger, Mrs. V. 3, Hatley St., Pittsworth, Qld.
Liddell, Mrs. C. 4, Cowper St., 25 View St., Woolahra, N.S.W.
Linke, Mrs. R. W. Pernleigh, Broadwater, Vic.
Lucas, Mrs. K. L. 10, Surrey Rd., Burry, N.S.W.
Luers, Mrs. P. 27 Loma St., Cottesloe, W.A.
Lyons, Mrs. R. Roadside Mail, Hannam Vale, N.S.W.
Marka, Mrs. B. Toora Rd., Welshpool, W.A.
Marsh, Mrs. L. c/o Box 21, Coogirig, W.A.
Masterson, Wally, Royal Parade, Ashgrove, Bris., Qld.
McAuley, Mrs. M. L. P.O. Box 50, Condonboll, N.S.W.
McClure, William, 14, Victoria St., Ashfield, N.S.W.
McCormick, Mrs. A. 34 High St., Swan Hill, Vic.
McDonald, Mrs. W. J. "Wommal Park," Mitchell Qld., McEvoy, Mrs. H. M. 21, Bankstown, N.S.W.
McKenzie, Mrs. C. c/o Railway Dept., Maryborough, Qld.
McGichrist, Mrs. J. L. 68 Second Ave., St. Peters, S.A.
McKay, Mrs. S. 19 Farrier Rd., Birrong, N.S.W.
McKenzie, Mrs. G. Mineeda Station, Blackall, Qld.
McKenzie, Mrs. P. 6 Smith St., Angaston, S.A.
McKell, Mrs. D. E. 10 Arthur St., Bankstown, N.S.W.
McNamara, Miss J. Byrill Creek, Uki, N.S.W.
McRae, Mrs. F. H. 12 Christina St., Edwardsdown, S.A.
Meier, Mrs. S. Box 24, Lorquon, Vic.
Miller, Mrs. J. Kikola, via Ungarie, N.S.W.
Moffat, Mrs. W. T. 50 Church St., Mayfield, Newcastle, N.S.W.
Moran, Mrs. R. E. 25 Sturt Ave., Col. Light Gardens, S.A.
Morris, B. J. Vebeni, Mrs. W. T. 21, Everton Terrace, Everton Park, Bris., Qld.
Moll, Mrs. L. J. 377 The Terrace, Port Pirie, S.A.
Mounica, Mrs. R. Empire Vale, Richmond River, N.S.W.
Murray, E. J. Box 371, Kalgoolie, W.A.
Newley, Mrs. B. L. Mill St., Warwick, Qld.
Newstead, S. 19 11th Ave., Railway Estate, Townsville, Qld.
Newton, Mrs. P. 54 Pitaroy St., Cowra, N.S.W.
Newton, Mrs. S. 28 Bell St., Preston, Vic.
Ninnes, Mrs. J. 16 Victoria Ave., Concord West, N.S.W.
Nolen, Mrs. B. 104 Vernon St., Nundah, Bris., Qld.
O'Brien, Mrs. V. Moon St., Eaglehawk, Vic.
O'Connell, Mrs. J. R. Wentworth St., Port Kembla, N.S.W.
O'Neil, Mrs. A. 45 King St., Maffra, Vic.
Osborne, Mrs. W. 10 Oberon St., Blackhurst, N.S.W.
Ottrey, Mrs. G. Box 27, Cohuna, Vic.
Owen, Mrs. P. M. 43 Elwin St., Peakhurst, N.S.W.
Paech, Mrs. C. 225 Yarra St., Sch. Geelong, Vic.
Pallmer, Mrs. J. 53 Carlton Pde., Pynchbow, N.S.W.
Parker, Mrs. D. 94 Tintern Ave., Dundas, N.S.W.
Parker, Mrs. E. R. F. "Irons," Narracan Rd., R.S.D., Trafalgar, Vic.
Peters, Mrs. L. 110 Eastington Lewis Ave., N.S.W.
Peterson, Mrs. E. A. 24 Hood Ave., Earlwood, N.S.W.
Perfremont, Mrs. R. 80 Belmont St., West Tamworth, N.S.W.
Perkins, Mrs. C. A. 47 Moody St., West Cairns, Qld.
Phillips, Mrs. A. E. 111 Richmond St., Gordon, Pk., Bris., Qld.
Phillips, Mrs. L. P. Billinudgel, N.S.W.
Pike, Mrs. L. c/o Landra, Crago, Home, N.S.W.
Sydney, Price, Mrs. A. 532 Guinea St., Albion, N.S.W.
Pinch, Mrs. R. C. 63 May St., Baywater, W.A.
Pinkerton, Miss P. "Banyandah," Moonlight Flat, via Scotchdale, Probert, Mrs. H. P. 1 Gowrie St., Torrens Pk., S.A.
Reid, Mrs. L. 5 Hill St., Manilla, N.S.W.
Richardson, L. 82 Grayson St., Mornington, Qld.
Ritter, Mrs. D. 68 Pemberton St., Albany, N.S.W.
Robertson, Duncan, 11 Harvillan St., Mackay, Qld.
Robertson, Mrs. S. 25 Balcombe St., Mornington, Vic.
Rohr, Mr. R. J. c/o A.A.P.G., Brogo, via Bega, N.S.W.
Robson, Mrs. S. 9a Bartlett St., Cowra, N.S.W.
Rourke, Mrs. M. 38 Barry St., Reservoir, Melb., Vic.
Rowland, Mrs. F. 68 Pemberton St., Albany, N.S.W.
Rutherford, Mrs. V. 21 Rose Ave., Norlane, Vic.
Saltmarsh, S. C. 58 Newton St., Shepparton, Vic.
Sartori, Mrs. S. Yandoff, P.O. Vic.
Scott, Mrs. J. 30, Liege St., Malakoff, W.A.
Scott, Miss G. 12 Woodward Ave., Strathfield, N.S.W.
Sellers, Mrs. J. 6 McFarlane St., Montmorency, Vic.
Shanahan, Mrs. E. 32 West Ave., Glen Innes, N.S.W.
Sheddy, A. K. 182 Canning Hwy., East Fremantle, W.A.
Shell, Mrs. M. J. West St., Wollongong, N.S.W.
Slater, Mrs. A. A. 11, St. Verona, Bris., Qld.
Smith, Mrs. E. 46 David Ave., Bardong, Qld.
Smith, G. M. 54 Park Terrace, Parkside, S.A.
Smith, G. E. 31 Robinson St., Inglewood, W.A.
Smith, Mrs. L. 36 Brunswick St., Orange, N.S.W.
Smith, Mrs. N. 4 Kipling St., Narragon, W.A.
Smith, Mrs. R. 18, St. Bowen, Qld.
Spencer, Mrs. D. 9 Kimberling Ave., Swan Hill, Vic.
Stade, Mrs. L. M. Box 91, G.P.O. Kalamang, N.S.W.
Stander, Mrs. R. Brookwood, via Glenelg, S.A.
Stevens, Mrs. F. Nichols Rd., Leongatha, Sth. Gippsland, Vic.
Stevens, Bruce, 17 Bryson St., Canterbury, Vic.
Stewart, Mrs. W. Matland Rd., Sandgate, N.S.W.
Tatham, Mrs. P. Private Bag 78, Pass River, King Island, Tas.
Taylor, Mrs. E. 9 Crescent St., Hunter's Hill, N.S.W.
Taylor, Mrs. R. 10, Victoria St., Adelaide, S.A.
Thomas, Mrs. M. Crocus St., Violet Town, Vic.
Thompson, Constance, 25 Rankine Rd., Torrensfield, S.A.
Thompson, Mrs. R. 31 Cavendish St., Nundah, Bris., Qld.
Thompson, Mrs. D. 28 Evans St., Rozelle, N.S.W.
Trehanre, Mrs. J. c/o D.C.A. Aerodrome, Mildura, Vic.
Treloar, Mrs. J. 9 Devide, Glynde Rd., Trararn, Adelaide, S.A.
Treloar, Mrs. E. 9 Devide, Ave. Coburg, Melb., Vic.
Trevelan, Mrs. L. D. 80 Isabella St., East, Nth. Parramatta, N.S.W.
Tristram, Mrs. P. T. 77 Hudson Rd., Albion, Bris., Qld.
Tulloch, Mrs. E. 24 Neika Ave., Launceston, Tas.
Turner, E. R. "Glencove," Yelbeni, W.A.
Tyndall, Mrs. B. A. Faala, via Thurukrah, Vic.
Tyne, Mrs. D. 24 Quarantine Rd., Launceston, Tas.
Vaughan, Miss V. Knight St., Park Ave., Nth. Rockhampton, Qld.
Verban, Mrs. P. E. J. Mile Line Rd., Upper Burnie, Tas.
Vincent, E. 56 Moyle St., East Ormond, Vic.
Wade, Mr. G. R. "Dry Lake," Narrandera, N.S.W.
Wallace, Mrs. J. 22 Elphinstone St., Cabarita, N.S.W.
Wallace, Mrs. T. J. Box 105, Benalla, Vic.
Ward, Mrs. F. W. Ingleburn Rd., Ingleburn, N.S.W.
Ward, Mrs. M. Circular Ave., Sawtell, N.S.W.
Wardie, Mrs. R. P. 64 Daley St., East, Fremantle, W.A.
Warren, Mrs. G. 39 Cobalt St., Broken Hill, N.S.W.
Warren, Mrs. K. 20 Melrose St., Moamah, N.S.W.
Watters, Mrs. E. M. Albert St., Deniliquin, N.S.W.
Watson, Miss P. 1 Ward St., West Preston, Vic.
Wauchope, G. N. Port Pirie, S.A.
Webber, Mrs. A. 4 Orreth St., Mayfield, Newcastle, N.S.W.
Webster, Mrs. E. 14 Tyndall St., Surrey Hills, Melb., Vic.
Webster, Mrs. R. Gargett, via Mackay, Qld.
Weir, Mrs. H. Bruford St., Murrumbidgee, Qld.
Wellsmore, Mrs. E. 10, Kingsford, N.S.W.
Wenzel, Brian, 70 Blamey Rd., Centennial Park, S.A.
Whale, Grace E. Macaulay St., Coorparoo, Qld.
White, Murray, Woodahill, P.O. Woodahill, W.A.
Whitfield, Miss M. 17 Tyndall St., Surrey Hills, Vic.
Whitton, Mrs. N. 6 Linton St., Upper Burnie, Tas.
Wilkinson, Mrs. M. 9, Monmouth, N.S.W.
Williams, Henry, "Glengary," Luckie St., Nunawading, Vic.
Wingate, Mrs. M. E. 154 Tenth St., Salisbury, S.A.
Winkler, E. Booner Creek, Lismore, N.S.W.
Woolley, Mrs. C. Cranlie, Esplanade, Mareeba, Qld.
Wright, Mrs. E. H. Strathkyrie, Raleigh, N.S.W.
Wright, D. K. Gordonville, via Bellington, N.S.W.
Wright, Mrs. O. 6 Foucart St., Roselle, N.S.W.
Yates, Mrs. A. C. Box 26, Capel, W.A.

Letters from our Readers

£1/1/- is paid for the best letter of the week as well as 10/6 for every letter published on this page.

THIS WEEK'S BEST LETTER

THREE years ago when I married a man 25 years my senior I came upon solid opposition from my family and friends. No one thought the marriage could possibly work out. I was a widow with two boys, he a widower with three children my age, and I am now 31.

Though there was such a difference in our ages, we had many common interests. We are ideally happy in every way, and a more considerate, thoughtful husband could not be found. I have the love of his children, they all love my kids, and there is no one in this world I would change places with.

So I say to girls who come up against this problem of differing ages: "Don't let well-meaning friends and relatives talk you out of marriage to an older man. If you are suited, go ahead and marry him."

They make truly wonderful husbands.

£1/1/- to "Happy Wife" (name supplied), Taree, N.S.W.

FOR young people who have no homes, the city is, at best, cold and impersonal, but on a wet weekend quite heartbreaking. We are an engaged couple, and both board in the city. We are saving up to build a home, so find it rather expensive to have to spend every wet Saturday at the pictures. Sundays are even worse. After attending Church in the morning, we can only "window shop" in the afternoon, as there isn't even a place where we can read the paper. Surely there are hundreds of couples like us who would patronise an organisation which provided clubrooms with reading and writing rooms.

10/6 to "Engaged Couple" (name supplied), Paddington and Bellevue Hill, N.S.W.

THE modern American way of thinking has finally arrived in the Australian outback! We recently received a booklet advertising tractors and tractor equipment. There, among the bulldozer blades, cranes, and other farm machinery, was none other than Marilyn Monroe, mouth open and eyes closed. As my husband put it: "Well, I'll be blowed!"

10/6 to "Pat" (name supplied), Innisfail, Qld.

WHEN an unexpected guest arrives, you'll save that last-minute rush to prepare a quick meal if you keep an "emergency" notebook in the pantry with your tinned goods. I do this, and list in the book soups, meats, and desserts which can be quickly prepared. Instead of writing the recipes out in full, I jot down the name of the recipe, which cookery book it is in, and the page number. This saves thumbing through all the cookbooks and searching for the recipe while the hungry guest waits for a meal.

10/6 to "Farmer's Wife" (name supplied), Lower Portland, N.S.W.

AS matron of a training school for nurses, I feel that the shortage of girls in the profession is due to weekend duties. Of course, these duties are imperative, as the sick and suffering do not belong to the 40-hour-week category. We must look, however, at the point of view of the trainee who sees her friends and family setting off to enjoy carefree leisure while she is left out, and left behind to work on Saturdays and Sundays. Though a nurse has a better salary, living quarters, amenities, and off-duty hours these days, she still feels herself cut off from friends made during schooldays, and from her family, too.

10/6 to "Once One of Them" (name supplied), Launceston, Tas.

YEARS ago, the clanging of a bell brought children running to buy ice-cream from the ice-cream man—a vendor who drove a clean cart where a hood protected the ice-cream containers. Now we have vendors rattling up and down our streets in battered "bombs." Untidy individuals clamber out to serve ices from containers which have very little cover. Apart from this, white-oversalls are available, so why not use them, Mr. Ice-cream Man?

10/6 to Mrs. W. K. Mole, Cammeray, N.S.W.

Gratitude Required?

THERE are plenty of people like you, A.M., of Glen Iris (The Australian Women's Weekly, 7/12/55). My own father was never tired of letting me know how much he was struggling to put me through college until it became so sickening that I left. I owe him nothing for something which was given grudgingly, and I have little or no respect for him. You, A.M., have done nothing more than the plain duty of every parent; in fact, you should thank the Lord that you were in a position to send your son to the University. Now that he wants to marry without finishing his course, you are possibly wondering how your friends would react if you played "the heavy parent." Of course, you have never thought it right to interfere with children's lives, but now when it concerns yourself it is a different story. If you give with the object that it is to be returned, be sure, my friend, it will give you a very bitter taste.

10/6 to T.W. (name supplied), Rockhampton, Qld.

WHY does A.M. think she suddenly has the right to live her child's life? If he allowed her to do so, he would be tied to her "apron-strings" for the rest of his life, having to depend on his mother for all decisions. What a cold and selfish world this would be if all mothers chose the wife, time, and place for their son's wedding. Heaven help the poor daughter-in-law to have such a self-pitying mother-in-law thrust on her. Obviously, if A.M. does not act in an understanding manner she will lose her son completely.

10/6 to M.G.G. (name supplied), Drummoyn, N.S.W.

Family Affairs

• Every family is faced with problems that must be given a workable solution. Each week we will pay £1/1/- for the best letter telling how you solved your family problem.

IT was a sad day for us when we discovered our wee girlie was a "slow learner." A pretty child with a kindly disposition, it was hardly possible to believe she was backward. However, she was definitely diagnosed, to put it pleasantly, as a "slow learner," and attended schools for such. At last the time came for her to leave, and there seemed no future for her. After some time we interviewed a kindergarten mistress, who agreed to take her on trial. Our girlie, who is kind and gentle, is interested in little children. So we are hopeful that this will give her a daily interest, and that her future life will be brightened by the knowledge that she has a "job."

£1/1/- to K.G. (name supplied), North Perth, W.A.

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ON SALE EVERY THURSDAY (Tuesday in W.A.) ONLY 9d.

ALTHOUGH the Queen and her husband are busy with plans for their tour of Nigeria, to begin on January 27, it will be "Christmas as usual" for the Royal Family this year at Sandringham, the Queen's holiday home in Norfolk.

There will be a real family party at Sandringham, including the Queen Mother, Princess Margaret, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and their sons, Prince William and Prince Richard, and the Duchess of Kent with her son, the young Duke, and daughter, Princess Alexandra.

This year the Queen is making one slight change in the Christmas Day routine.

In the evening she and the Duke will attend a carol-singing service.

Usually the Royal Family attends only the morning service on Christmas Day.

The Queen has chosen the carols, and they include most of the well-loved favorites — "Come, All Ye Faithful," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

Except for the evening service, Christmas Day at Sandringham will follow the well-loved pattern set down by the Queen's father and grandfather.

Midday dinner will be served at 1.30 p.m. and will be the same menu as in millions of homes in the British Commonwealth — roast turkey and plum pudding.

On Christmas Day the Royal Family will celebrate two birthdays. The Duchess

Worth Reporting

of Gloucester will be 54 and Princess Alexandra will be 19. The Duchess of Gloucester has aged little since her years in Australia.

Her hair is greyer now, but her complexion is still pink and white.

Birthday as well as Christmas gifts will be presented to her and will probably include old silver and Chelsea china figures, which she collects.

During the holidays there may also be some discussion on whether Princess Margaret should undertake a full-scale tour next year.

At present in London there is a strong rumor that she may go to Canada next September and visit the United States on her way home.

Earlier it had been suggested she may go to Australia.

A visit to New York has always been one of Princess Margaret's pet personal ambitions.

Eye-catching male fashions

AMERICAN fashions for men get stranger every season. Latest innovations are mandarin-collared sports shirts, sports shirts with scooped-out, low necklines, middie blouses for sports wear, and pedal-pushers.

The male version of pedal-pushers are tapered to mid-calf and slit to the knee. They're made, we're informed, in white, red, and assorted stripes for wear with a stripe-trimmed cotton middie blouse.

For playboys there is the playsuit—a one-piece, knee-length, short-sleeved garment in striped denim—or a striped cotton beach ensemble with boxer shorts and a low-necked pullover to match.

One of the latest bathing suits for men has a removable

skirt, inspired by the Hawaiian pareu.

While all this highly colored nonsense has been going on in America, the British have been quietly working on less revolutionary styles.

They have produced a poplin shirt for men that doesn't need ironing.

STOCKHOLM art-lovers didn't quite know what to make of a painting shown at a recent art exhibition.

The painting was of the "primitive" school, and signed "A.P.E. Van Troot, Djurgården."

Djurgården is Stockholm's zoo, and the painter—A.P.E. Van Troot—one of the zoo's monkeys.

The journalist who promoted the stunt admitted that the signature was a forgery. "I couldn't teach the monkey to sign his name," he said.

Small payment to Neptune

BIG-GAME fishermen are a hardy lot. Rain, wind, and choppy seas mean nothing to them once they have a fish on the line.

We went down to Bateman's Bay, on the south coast of New South Wales, to take a passive part in a recent big-game fishing carnival.

The fishermen, competitors for the carnival's biggest-fish prizes, fished keenly and doggedly, disregarding the dreadful weather and the pitching of the boat. All we did was stand and watch, and it took all our powers just to remain on our feet.

Our host for the day was Sydney auctioneer Max Lawson, whose boat, Murrawolga, won the champion-boat plaque for the best point score during the carnival.

Mr. Lawson believes in paying in advance for the fish he catches. Before trolling began he took a coin from a bag of coins from half a dozen countries and tossed it into the water as payment to Neptune.

During the afternoon the rain came down heavily, and suddenly there was a hammer-head shark on the line.

Murrawolga's skipper, Charlie Chambers, of Sydney, played the fish for 55 minutes before landing it.

The shark weighed 340lb.—an Australian record for a catch on a 15-thread (breaking strain 50lb.) line.

We've come to the conclusion that Neptune must have got Max Lawson's coin—and decided to carry out his part of the bargain.

An oasis of color

THE most colorful spot in Australia is Batchelor, the fast-growing Rum Jungle village south of Darwin, where, we are told, the 300-odd homes are like "an oasis of color in a desert where geiger counters tick over among the rich uranium mines."

This is the opinion of Mr. Jack Pullinger, manager of a new color centre in Sydney, who spent two weeks in Batchelor earlier this year giving free advice on home color schemes.

Maybe he's right... it's our bet that the most colorful spot in Sydney is the company's new ultra-modern centre in Elizabeth St.

Facing the entrance to the centre is an arresting black wall adjoining another wall covered with an abstract design of brightly colored pegs and discs.

A black, modernistic spiral staircase leads to the reception desk and display area, which contains a complete home lay-out, including lounge, bedroom, and kitchen.

The display room and adjoining offices have been painted in all colors and paints available on their range to show clients what the color will look like on their walls.

AT the salon of a Paris hair-dresser you can now have your hair done on a subscription basis.

You pay a regular monthly subscription, and can have as many hair-do's as you wish during the month.

IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY



By RUD

"Baby Talk" contest No. 8 and results of No. 5

PRIZES totalling £100 can be won for bright, appropriate captions to this picture.

Each week we offer a first prize of £50, three awards of £10, three of £5, and five of £1 for captions to our appealing baby studies by Constance Bannister of New York.

Prize-winning entries in "Baby Talk" Contest No. 5, at right, will give you the idea.

Contest rules are given below. But remember that each group of entries from the one competitor must be accompanied by the identification coupon so that judges will know to which picture your caption refers.

"Baby Talk" No. 8 closes on January 2, and the winners will be announced in our issue dated January 18.

A surprising number of people are still forgetting to include the name, address, and State with entries. So be sure to check your entry before you post it.



Baby Talk No. 8

Captions should have a light touch. They should be no longer than 15 words. Judges find that the most amusing ones are usually quite short.

Dozens of readers continue to receive the same inspiration for their caption, and to express it in almost the same words.

In "Baby Talk" No. 5, the most often repeated entry was, "Look, Mum, no hands," with "Anything you can do, I can do better" in second place.

Other favorites were, "For what we are about to receive" and "I now pronounce you man and wife."

In each case the first entry opened is kept aside for final judging.

CONTEST RULES

1. Write a caption of not more than 15 words for the picture on this page. You may send as many entries as you like.
2. Each group of entries from the one competitor must be accompanied by entry coupon at left.
3. Write clearly, addressing entries to "Baby Talk," Box 7052, G.P.O., Sydney.
4. Entries for "Baby Talk" Contest No. 8 close on JANUARY 2. Winners will be announced in our issue dated JANUARY 18.
5. The decision of the judges will be final. No entries can be returned nor any correspondence entered into.
6. When entries are duplicated, the first one opened will be put aside for further judging.
7. Employees of Consolidated Press Ltd. and associate companies and their families are not eligible to enter this contest.

The simple caption "I do" won Mr. John Vinge, Meath Park Private Bag, via Wodonga, Victoria, first prize of £50 in "Baby Talk" Contest No. 5.

READERS saw Baby No. 5 as a clergyman, hamburger-stall attendant, hospital matron, King Farouk, charm-school teacher, and committee-woman.

£10 prizes were won by:

Mrs. J. Strickland, 807 Ligar St., Ballarat, Vic.

"Thank you, ladies. I will now sing for you 'One Fine Day,' from 'Madame Butterfly.'"

Mrs. I. Harris, Box 390, Cairns, Qld.

"I feel very proud to have been chosen Queen of this carnival."

Miss R. M. Blomfield, R.M.B. 527, Walcha, N.S.W.

"Now, dear, have I ever lied to you?"

£5 prizes were won by:

Misses J. Williams and E. Farmer, 60 Keira St., Wollongong, N.S.W.

"They told me at the employment agency to try here."

Miss E. Gabriel, 3 Balfour Rd., Rose Bay, N.S.W.

"O.K., shoot!"

Miss M. King, 48 Huntriss St., Torrensville, S.A.

"It is now my pleasant duty to present the prizes."

£1 prizes were won by:

Mrs. Doris Hurst, Oura, via Wagga, N.S.W.

"Come to the cookhouse door, boys!"

Mrs. S. Watson, 24 Churchill Ave., Shoalwater Bay, W.A.

"Ladies, quiet, please! The vicar wishes to address you."

Mrs. E. G. Fabarius, 2 Mudies Rd., St. Ives, N.S.W.

"Well, Mrs. Brown, it could be twins."

Mrs. A. N. Hunter, 68 Torrens St., Braddon, A.C.T.

"I hope everything is perfect, it's my first dinner-party."

Mrs. A. E. Sturges, 46 Katoomba Crescent, Rosetta, Tas.

"Perhaps a hatpin or two..."



"I do."



FRENCHMAN JACQUES DOYASBERE will be one of the visiting jockeys to ride at the International Meeting in Melbourne on December 31. He is shown here on Tantime after a win in Paris.



AMERICAN JOHNNY ADAMS, who is fond of a game of billiards, hopes to hunt kangaroos while he is here. He is one of the top six U.S. jockeys.



ENGLISHMAN W. H. CARR, the Queen's jockey, wears her racing colors of purple and scarlet with gold braid on the jacket. Carr has ridden many of Her Majesty's horses to victory in England, has been a jockey for 26 years.

World glamor jockeys to compete here

A pin-up boy whom French women have tried unsuccessfully to catch for a husband and a debonair little Yorkshireman who was wed at Gretna Green will be among the overseas glamor jockeys to ride in Melbourne's International Day at Caulfield Racecourse on December 31.

THEY are Frenchman Jacques Doyasbere and the Queen's jockey, W. H. Carr. Other star jockeys to visit Melbourne for the race meeting will be South African Harold Wright and American Johnny Adams. Mrs. Carr, her 17-year-old daughter, and Mrs. Wright are also making the trip.

Melbourne Racing Club officials say the raceday on December 31 will be the first international meeting held in Australia. It has been arranged as part of the club's policy to provide brighter race meetings for the public.

Thirty-six-year-old Jacques Doyasbere told Jack Pollard, of our London office, he is thrilled with the idea of visiting Melbourne.

"It is like a fairy tale," Doyasbere said. "The organizers asked my friend Rae (Togo) Johnstone, the Australian who lives in France, to ride. He couldn't go. So he told them to invite me."

Doyasbere, one of France's best post-war riders, is very popular with English racegoers, too. Men call him "Jacquot," and women like his suntan and athletic features.

That's why he is known as the pin-up boy of jockeys.

Steadfastly he has remained a bachelor, despite gossip about several romances.

He became a jockey in 1936, when he was apprenticed to the Argentinian rider Domingo Tortello.

Two years later he won the apprentices' championship, and in 1942 he was first jockey

key for the French cotton magnate Marcel de Boussac, the man whose backing and silk fashions made Christian Dior and who claims to have made a shirt for every living Frenchman.

Doyasbere rode in Boussac colors until 1946. Later his friend Rae Johnstone took over as Boussac's top jockey.

"I feel in top condition," said Doyasbere. "I will be ready for big things in Melbourne. So far I do not know what I will ride, but I'm confident of finishing close up."

Doyasbere will fly direct to Melbourne from France, and complete a round-the-world trip on his way home. He

will meet Johnstone, who will be holidaying there, in Honolulu, and they will probably go home through America.

Jacquot's record in France and in England is impressive. He has won France's biggest race, the Grand Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, four times, and the next biggest, the Jockey Club Grand Prix, twice. He is

a competent all-round athlete.

Jack Pollard says W. H. Carr, who is known as "Harry" Carr, was apprenticed when aged 12 to the late Sam Armstrong, one of Britain's finest trainers. Carr has been riding for 26 years.

The sight of Carr in the Queen's distinctive purple, scarlet, and gold colors is well known to all regular British racegoers, as is the story of his wedding. He has ridden for the Queen for 10 years.

"What the Queen does not know about racing isn't worth knowing," he said once.

"I have much to thank the Royal Family for. But for them I might not now be in good physical condition. I'd be a cripple."

"When I broke my leg at Birmingham in 1948, and was having a pretty thin time in hospital, King George VI sent his own orthopaedic surgeon to see me."

"The surgeon removed a piece of bone from my hip and grafted it on my leg, and soon had me in the saddle again."

Carr was only 21 when he made headlines as an obscure north county jockey who ran away from home to Gretna Green with a handsome, green-eyed Yorkshire lass, Joan Grounwater, and was married over the world-famous anvil by the blacksmith priest.

These days Harry and his smartly dressed wife live in a sprawling country house some would describe as a mansion.

He pays supertax, has a 17-year-old daughter, and likes to recall laughingly his mother-in-law's horror when she heard her daughter had married a jockey at Gretna Green.



AT HOME at Newmarket, England, jockey W. H. Carr and his wife sit before the fire. On the mantelpiece are trophies he has won both for racing and for the champion birds he exhibits in partnership with Bruce Hobbs, another English jockey.

"My father, who was a churchwarden, was simply flabbergasted," said Mrs. Carr. "In fact, nobody was really enthusiastic. We had to be married again when the family post-mortems were over."

Carr rides for Captain Boyd-Rochfort, who shares the job of training the Queen's horses with Noel Murless. He rode his first winner at 14, has won many big English races.

George McGann, of our New York office, says smiling Johnny Adams is one of America's most colorful and talented jockeys, who is famous for his courage and aggressive riding tactics.

Forty-year-old Adams, a grandfatherly despite his boyish face, has a serious racing rival in his only son, John Adams, junior.

Their rivalry is extremely spirited. Last year John, junior, claimed a "Father is right" fowl against his father for interference in the straight during a race at Washington Park, in Chicago.

After the racing stewards had deliberated the protest and viewed the motion picture film of the race, the announcer made this statement over the public-address system to the crowd:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the stewards have decided father was right. The protest is disallowed."

Johnny is quite familiar with the Australian racing scene, through his good friend Johnny Longden, who rode in Australia several years ago. He has a high regard for Australian horses, too.

Johnny rode Shannon II, one of the greatest Australian gallopers ever seen in the U.S., to smashing victories in the Argonaut Handicap and the Hollywood Gold Cup of 1948.

Johnny is regarded as America's best rider on turf

courses, which will be a great help to him in Australia. The majority of races in the United States are run over dirt tracks, which differ considerably from the grass courses of Australia and England.

Adams, of course, is skilled in handling horses on the dirt, but, in addition, has a real "feel" for turf riding.

His seat in the saddle is more like that of English and Australian riders than that of his fellow-Americans.

He does not ride "acey-deucey"—with the inside (or left) stirrup long and the outside stirrup several inches shorter to enable the jockey to throw his weight towards the rail on turns—with both legs fully outstretched in the irons.

Johnny Adams is one of the all-time greats of American turf history. In his 20 years in the saddle he has led the list of top winning jockeys in the country three different times, in 1937, 1942, and 1943.

Although he is not riding as much these days as he used to—he likes to get away for a week or a fortnight's hunting several times a year—Johnny is concurrently third highest money-winning jockey in America.

In Melbourne the overseas jockeys will stay at the Hotel Australia, in Collins St. An extensive programme of entertainment has been arranged for them during their fortnight's visit. Mr. J. C. Reilly, secretary of the Melbourne Racing Club, said.

One of the club's biggest problems is the request of American Johnny Adams for a kangaroo hunt while he is here.

"It looks as though we will have to put him on a plane and take him to some part of Australia where kangaroos are not protected," Mr. Reilly said.



THE ARTIST

About Grandma Moses

THIS painting by the famous American primitive painter Grandma Moses, who was 95 last September, was presented recently to the National Art Gallery of New South Wales. It was hung at the Gallery this week.

"Hunting for Water" was given to the Gallery by Dr. Otto Kallir, who acts as representative for Grandma Moses, on condition that the Gallery donated £150 to an Australian children's charity.

The money has been given to the Sydney Legacy War Orphans' Fund.

Another Grandma Moses painting, entitled "In 1800," was also recently acquired by the Queensland National Art Gallery.

Grandma Moses, whose career has been one of the most extraordinary of this century, has been described as "America's best-loved painter."

This self-taught artist never picked up a paint brush until she was 76, and until the age of 80 was an unknown farmer's wife living in a country village in the State of New York.

In 1937, when she could no longer cope with strenuous farm work, she began, at her daughter's suggestion, to make needlework pictures, and shortly after started to paint in oils.

Today, Grandma Moses, a tiny woman only 5ft. 1in. tall, is an important figure in the international art world.

She has produced more than 1000 canvases, all of which she has painted indoors, relying on memory to depict the abundant farm and village life around her during the changing seasons.

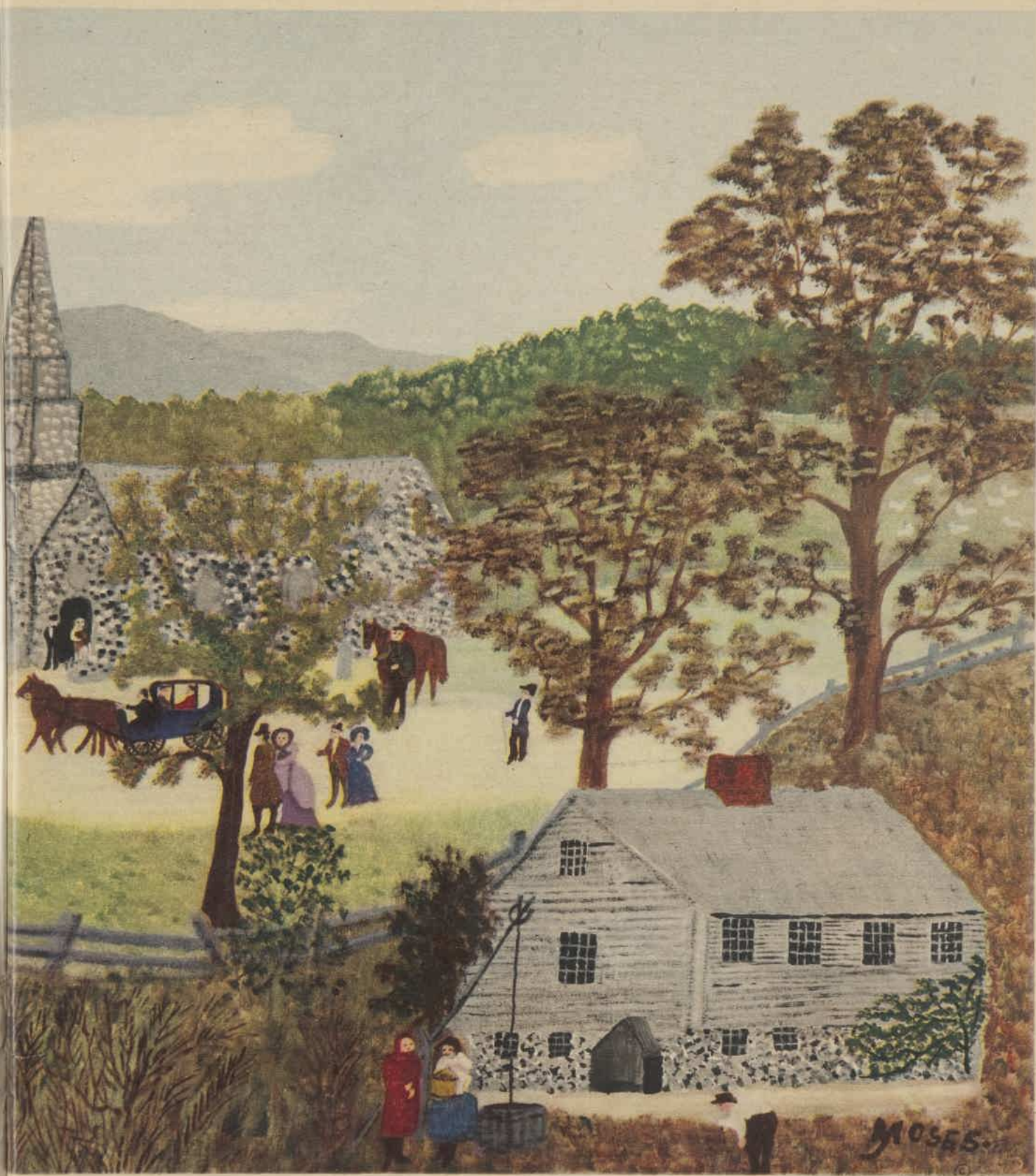
Her distinctive style is characterised by clear colors and simplicity of design.

At the age of 95 she still paints occasionally, and is as mentally alert as ever.



A painting to frame— "HUNT

• "Hunting for Water" is in the possession of the National Art Gallery of New South Wales. Copyright Grandma Moses Properties, Inc., New York.



"WAITING FOR WATER" by Grandma Moses

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - December 28, 1955

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while she explained that David had quietly gathered up what little money he had and bought a passage. There were no berths in tourist or cabin class, but he'd managed to pick up a first-class cancellation. On the first day out he had waited by the gate separating the decks, hoping to see Folly. "I don't know how I happened to be passing there—it was fate, I guess," she said, her eyes starry.

"Tomorrow," she said, "we can go up to the first-class pool and he's going to meet us there. You and I if you'll go. I'd like you to meet him, Van."

"You don't need me," said Van bitterly. "I'll stay here with your mother or find some other playmate."

"But you don't understand!" she cried. "If mother found out—Well, David thinks we ought to be careful not to hurt her. Once we're off this ship and married, then—Oh, I don't know. It's hard to explain." A hint of bitterness crept into her voice. "And you're not helping. Why don't you say something?"

Van felt cold with anger. "Look," he said, "I'm nobody's stooge. I don't know where you've been fitting me into your plans, but you'd better fit me out."

"Please listen," she cried. "I'm not trying to use you, Van. But David thinks you and I ought to stick together for Mother's sake or something. We just don't want her to suspect."

"It sounds pretty rotten to me," he interrupted.

"I knew it would. In some ways it does to me, too. But I—" She looked into his eyes and her own were sick with worry and confusion. "Help me, Van, won't you? You've been so nice—and I do so need you."

Abruptly, he pulled her close. "All right," he said gruffly. "Sure." Then he leaned down and kissed her.

For a fraction of a second her lips met his halfway. Then she drew back and simply looked at him. At last she said, in a faint whisper, "That wasn't fair."

"Forgive me," he said softly, almost sick with self-hatred.

Folly turned away, and went inside.

It was a long time before Van went indoors. When he did he skirted the lounge and walked down to his cabin. There he threw off his clothes, turned in, and slept badly.

The dining-room was nearly full the next morning. Mrs. Mason tossed him a hearty greeting as he passed their table, but Folly hardly looked up. After breakfast he wandered about disconsolately, hoping and yet fearing to meet her. It was no fun carrying a torch for a girl who loved someone else.

At midmorning they came face to face. He dropped into the lounge, and she was there, her eyes fixed on the door through which he entered. He walked over, feeling slouchy and disreputable.

"Hello," said Folly. "Join me?"

He sat down. "About last night—" he began.

But she broke in: "Will you take me swimming this afternoon? Please. I've forgotten last night." Her eyes pleaded with him.

He nodded wordlessly, and four hours later he found himself shaking the hand of David Girard, a tall, boyish-looking person.

The indoor swimming-pool lay deep in the first-class section of the ship. It couldn't have been more inviting. Large gazing fish decorated the walls, and green-tiled tables surrounded the pool. The gleeful voices of the swimmers sliced the air. A holiday mood hung over the scene. And Van never felt more depressed.

He made a point of not finding his bathing-suit, so

Continuing . . . Her Name Was Folly

[from page 1]

while Folly retired to the dressing-room he and Girard seated themselves at a table.

"I've been wanting to meet you," Girard said. "Folly's quite sold on you, you know."

"So am I," said Van. "On her, I mean." His cheeks felt hot.

"Everybody's gone on Folly," Girard stretched out his long legs and wiggled the toes. "Quite a girl, isn't she—our Folly?"

It wasn't that he sounded possessive. He didn't. He sounded, rather, objective. Almost immediately Van disliked him, and hated himself for judging so hastily and on such meagre grounds.

Girard leaned over and put a hand affectionately on Van's shoulder. "Seriously, old man, it's kind of you to put yourself out for Folly and me."

"I'm not putting myself out," Van moved his chair a trifle.

"Well, Folly's mother would be watching like a hawk if you weren't around. She's a suspicious old bird."

WHEN Folly returned, radiant in a smart bathing-suit, Girard dropped his rather offhand suavity. He sat up straight, and the studied smile became a youthful grin. The three of them talked about Paris for a long time, and it was good talk—free of innuendo, free of bitterness.

Then Girard and Folly took a plunge together and as Van watched them, he felt suddenly ashamed. The man's attitude towards Folly was tender and protective. No wonder she'd wanted to swim the Atlantic to get back to him. Only a thwarted suitor could misjudge David Girard.

As they returned, she gave Girard her hand, and they sat and talked. But, again and again, Van caught that familiar look of anxious remoteness in her eyes. Girard never seemed to catch it, and not once during the long afternoon did he seem to notice her pre-occupation.

When Van and Folly said good-bye to Girard and passed through the temporarily open gate, they lingered for a moment in the corridor. "Didn't you like David?" she asked.

It sounded like a prayer, and he answered as best he could.

"You'll like him better when you get to know him. This—" She hesitated. "This is a silly, silly situation."

"You mean about me?"

She dropped her eyes. "No; we've forgotten that, remember? I mean this secretive business. I don't like it. Do you?"

He smiled and shrugged, and they separated.

A good hour remained before dinner, enough time to search out Mrs. Mason. He wanted to talk with her, though he wasn't sure what to say.

He found her in the lounge. "Where's Folly?" she called, striding over.

He had to smile. Only two days before, he had found this woman an amusing stranger, and now he welcomed her as friend and ally. "Folly's dressing," he said. "Want to take a turn on deck?"

Arm in arm, they paced the length of the covered promenade. Van was surprised when he blurted out, "Why don't you like David Girard, Mrs. Mason?"

"I've told you," she said sternly. "He's no good."

"Folly's in love with him. I don't understand why you'd ruin things for her just because of—well, just a suspicion."

"You think I'm crazy, don't you? Well, I am, Van. I'm

hopelessly crazy a lot of the time. But not this time," she murmured. "Believe me."

"Folly has a mind of her own. She'll find her way back to him, you know." He spoke very casually.

The broadest of smiles crinkled her rosy cheeks. "You sort of like the child, darling, don't you?"

"Does it matter?" he said angrily.

"Of course it does. She likes you, too."

"She likes Girard, and you know it."

"Van, Van, Van!" She sounded almost gruff now. "I've told you, that's over and done with." It was amazing how softly she could talk when she wanted to. "Come over to the railing," she whispered, "and I'll tell you something."

He followed her. For a long time she peered out at the dark water in silence. Then, her eyes still averted, she said, "Nobody else knows this, and you're not to repeat it. I gave that loafer a cheque for twenty-five hundred dollars. He took it and skidoed. That's how much he wanted Folly. That's how much you have to be afraid of."

His heart missed a beat. "You mean you paid him off, and he took it? But why? What did he want from Folly in the first place?"

"Money," she said. "People like that always smell out money."

Involuntarily, he glanced about him. "But . . ." he began.

"We're not rich," said Mrs. Mason, "but we're not poor,

call a lady," Howard Cameron said, "and, in this case, unfair."

"Well, Everett reads," Bitsy said. "I guess he learns so many new words he has to use 'em on somebody."

"I commend your charity," Cameron said dryly.

"Thank you," Bitsy said. She sounded grateful for the least crumb of approval.

"Speaking of Junior's misadventure in the lunch line, aren't you kids hungry?"

Bitsy shook her head. "I can't eat. I'm depressed."

"Bitsy depresses easy," Mary Anne said.

"I've lost my breakfast three mornings straight," said Bitsy.

Howard looked sharply at her. Observing the real misery in her face and the greenish pallor, as of sickness or fear, in the skin around her mouth, he was clutching by a bourgeois old wives' panic. Surely what leaped to his mind couldn't have happened to Bitsy. She was too nice and naive and big!

And yet, biologically, she was no longer a child, and in the courtroom he had encountered many sordid instances of precocious misbehaviour among adolescents. ("Other women have lived through this," Mary Anne had said.)

"Mother thinks I'll feel better when the dance is over," Bitsy said. "But I may feel worse."

"The dance?" Howard said weakly.

"That's what's giving me nervous indigestion," Bitsy explained. "I have to give a dance tomorrow night for seventy-five people. The whole ninth grade."

"Bits doesn't know when she's lucky," said Mary Anne. "A snazzy dance. With a real orchestra and a spring motif!"

"I wish I was dead," said Bitsy.

"Oh," Howard Cameron said. "I believe I heard your father say something about a

either. I like cabin class. It's homier. At any rate, we won't be troubled by Mrs. Girard any more."

Suddenly he was furious. "Why didn't you tell Folly, then?" he cried. "Why'd you let her eat her heart out for that—that—"

"How could I tell my own child what a heel she'd fallen for? I'd rather she'd have a little heartburn this way and keep her self-respect. She was too innocent to see through that kind of man. I did—but you wouldn't want me to taunt her with it now, would you?"

"No, I guess not," said Van. "It was just a youthful fling, don't you see? She's over it."

Never throw mud.
You may miss your
mark; but you must
have dirty hands.
—Joseph Parker.

Good gracious, Van, who should know that better than you?" Once more her irrepresible self, she reached over and tweaked his cheek.

Van glanced at his watch. There was still time before dinner—plenty of time for what he had to do. "Mrs. Mason," he said breathlessly, "I think you're quite a gall!"

He bent over and kissed her forehead, but he didn't wait to see whether her eyes would open and stare like her daughter's. Instead, he bolted off like a hound-dog chasing rabbits.

A neat green bill tucked into the hand of a passing steward opened the gate for him, and the purser on the first-class deck

gave him Girard's cabin number unquestioningly.

Van knocked at the cabin door and pushed in without waiting for an answer. Girard lay at full length on his bed, a cigarette in one hand, a magazine in the other.

Girard raised himself on one arm. "Come on in." There was no irony in his startled voice, even though his unexpected guest was already inside the room.

VAN stopped short of the bed. "Listen, and keep your trap shut," he said. "I'm smaller than you, but I've got a heavy fist. If you show your face in front of Folly Mason again I'm going to tell her everything, understand? I'll tell her about the charming 'little-boy' act that you slough off so fast when she's not around. I'll tell her where you got the money for this trip, too, and why you're so cagey about not letting her mother know you're aboard."

"Listen here!" Girard was sitting up now, his face a dead-white.

"No, you listen," Van stood belligerently, almost hoping the fellow would make a stab at him. "There's nothing rotter than a guy who'd take a bribe to quit a girl, except maybe a guy who'd double-cross the game by quitting her and having her, too—as well as her money. You're a cheating phony—and now, if you've got anything to say, go on and say it."

His face still pale, Girard got to his feet. "Cool off, old man," he said. "You sound like a grade-B movie."

For an instant Van stood in silence, then he swung in anger. The blow, though badly aimed, caught Girard on the chin and caused him to sit down hard on the floor. "O.K.,"

Girard said, from the floor.

"That'll do for now, Tarzan."

In spite of himself, Van had to laugh. The guy did have a sense of humor. "Goodbye," Van said. "And goodbye for the Masons, too." Feeling wonderful, he went out and closed the door behind him.

At dawn the next morning Van walked out on deck expecting to find himself alone. He was surprised to see Folly standing at the stern rail.

"Not planning another swim, are you?" he said. "It's a long way back now."

"I don't know," she replied. "I'm honestly not sure. Paris was such fun, but it's getting farther and farther away."

Van touched her coat sleeve ever so lightly. "You don't like intrigue, do you?" he said softly. "You like things on the up and up."

She turned and leaned back against the rail, tilting her head upward to look at the sky. "It's no good, Van," she said. "I've known it almost since the minute I saw him aboard here the other day. There's something wrong, and the awful thing is I can't even put my finger on it. All I know is—well, I feel more at home with you even than with him. I—the other night—"

She lapsed into silence, and he decided to let the subject drop. She was suffering now, and she would be still further baffled during the day to come, when she realised David was avoiding her. But she'd get over it. Maybe some day, when Folly was ready, he would explain to her what had happened.

Meanwhile, there was no hurry. In comfortable silence Van drew her close as they stood at the railing. The sun came up, and the great ship sailed smoothly towards home.

(Copyright)

Continuing . . .

A Spring Motif

[from page 5]

dance." He wanted to laugh aloud from pure relief until he reflected soberly that entertaining the whole ninth grade was no laughing matter.

Mrs. Cameron appeared in the doorway. She wore slacks—a garment that, her husband thought, made her figure look more feminine than ever in an absurd, agreeable way—and a bandanna tied around her short yellow curls. "Howie!" she cried. "What a grand surprise!" She came and kissed him. "Hi, girls. How was school?"

"About as usual," said Mary Anne.

I'VE just come from your house, Bitsy," Julia Cameron said. "I've been helping your mother. I bet you can't wait for tomorrow night!" Her voice sounded false and chirpy.

"I wish I was dead," said Bitsy.

"Everybody worries before a party," Julia told her. "You'll have a wonderful time."

"It's different with me," Bitsy said stubbornly. "I've been to dances, and sometimes, beforehand, I thought they might be fun. But when I was at them I always wished I was dead." She stood up. "Mother wants to wash my hair."

Mary Anne walked to the porch with her friend. Julia sank down on the sofa. "I wish Bitsy'd show a little nerve and quit saying she wants to die," she said. "It's discouraging to her mother."

"The child's in a state of terror," her husband told her. "Why should she give a dance if she doesn't want to?"

"Bitsy needs a push," his

wife said. "When you consider other girls her age—Mary Anne and the girls at the junior high school—you'll realise how little poise the child has."

"I am considering them," Howard said, thinking of the smooth, smug-mannered damsels who often came to his house and of how easily Mary Anne took color from them. "And I think it's throwing Bitsy to the lions!"

"I have my qualms, too," Julia confessed. "But Bitsy has to hold up her social end. And the way Al Blackburn's making money—did you know he gave Gladys diamond earrings for her anniversary, and he's ordered her a new convertible for Mother's Day?—Bitsy can have unlimited fun if she'll only co-operate. If Mary Anne were like Bitsy . . ."

"I wouldn't care a rap," said Howard.

"You wouldn't?" Mary Anne exclaimed, coming into the room. "You wouldn't care a rap if I were a lummox like Bitsy and never even had a date to go to the movies or play Wee-Wee golf? I think that's darn mean of you."

"I'd like you any way you were," her father explained. "I like Bitsy."

"I love her like a sister," Mary Anne protested. "But I'm glad I'm normal."

"The norm isn't constant, my dear," said Howard in his blandest jury-box manner. "And it's my contention that no girl should be required to endure these social functions and this business of what you call 'dating' (he pronounced the word as if it were slightly vulgar)—this artificial pair-

ing off of the sexes—until those things seem normal for her."

"Oh, Bitsy believes in pairing off the sexes," Mary Anne said. "She's been in love for three years. With Everett Jones."

"Of all the arrant nonsense!" her father scoffed.

"The torch was lit in the sixth grade," Mary Anne informed him. "She was wrestling with Everett and he got his knee in her stomach so she had to bite him. When she tasted his blood, something happened to her."

Howard laughed in a helpless way that resembled weeping.

Mary Anne, with a rueful show of reluctance, joined in the mirth. "I know it has its funny side," she said. "But then love often does. And Bitsy couldn't help herself. It was lit."

"Lit, eh?" Howard said, wiping his eyes.

"The torch," Mary Anne said. "At first she just picked on him. She followed him around and tripped him up and stuff like that, and he didn't mind too much. But then Everett's mother complained to Mrs. Blackburn and Mr. Blackburn told Bitsy a girl was supposed to be sweet and build up a boy's ego. So Bits started being real humble and telling Everett how gorgeous he was, and he began to prosecute her."

"Persecute," said Howard.

"I always get those words confused," Mary Anne said with a blithe unconcern that made her father wonder if she didn't use malapropisms on purpose, because she thought them winsome.

"He gives her these hateful nicknames—Nemesis, you know, and the Girl from Mars. And he made a poem about her, a take-off on that dumb Lucy thing we had to read in literature. Everett said: 'She dwelt among untrodden ways, among

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her pappy's loot, a dame whom no one cared to praise, and no one dared to shoot. Bitsy cried when he passed it to her in algebra."

"I can hardly blame her," Julia said.

"She saved it, though. It's sacred to her because Everett touched it," Mary Anne continued. "And Everett's furious because his mother's making him go to the dance. He has to be Bitsy's partner and wear his brother's tux."

Howard frowned. "A tux? At fourteen?"

"I warned Gladys Blackburn to make the occasion as formal as possible," Julia said. "I've never recovered from the time Mary Anne had a Halloween gathering and I made the fatal error of calling it informal!"

"I was only thirteen," Mary Anne said, "but that party made me. People did things that wouldn't have been allowed in any other house in town!"

"They certainly did," her mother agreed. "The boys climbed on the roof and hurled vile epithets at passing cars. And, fool that I was, I put bunches of grapes around the jack-o-lantern, and they picked them off one by one and threw them on the floor and slid on them."

"I remember," her husband said.

"I'm surprised you do," Julia retorted with a touch of old rancor. "If my memory serves, you claimed to be catching cold and went to bed in the spare room with the door locked."

"And the first dancing-school party!" Mary Anne cried with a nostalgic catch in her voice. "Miss Battle told the boys that no gentleman ever kicked a lady while they were dancing the conga. So they kicked us every time there was a waltz. That was Everett's idea." She sighed, as if for a vanished morning of life. "How juvenile those parties were! The one tomorrow will be an adult affair."

"Try to make it a success," Julia pleaded. "Keep the boys dancing."

"You know how boys are," said Mary Anne. "They won't listen to reason. They don't have human feelings." She clasped her hands. "Oh, I suffer for Bitsy. If she'll only play it cool!"

"What do you mean—cool?" asked Howard.

"Oh, you know . . ." Mary Anne's voice trailed off vaguely. "Just cool."

"I see. Cool," her father said. But he didn't really hope to see. He was sufficiently acquainted with the jargon of the young to know that even when it made sense it never made the kind of sense it seemed to make.

"Gladys is as scared as Bitsy," Julia said. "She and Al want us over to hold their hands and give them courage. They have some new D'Oyley Carte records we can play in the upstairs sitting-room."

"Will the Jones' be there?" asked Howard.

"No. Everett won't appear in public with his parents," Mary Anne said. "They embarrass him."

"Will we embarrass you?" her father asked.

"Not me," Mary Anne said, shrugging. "My French teacher says I have 'sang-froid'."

For a moment Howard toyed with the idea of inquiring into the circumstances that had led to the teacher's remark. But, feeling that it was high time to re-establish a prudent distance between himself and his daughter, he rose. "I've enjoyed talking with you, my pet," he said. "And now, I dare say, you wish to practise your piano lesson. I intend to cut the grass."

The Camerons and the Black-

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burns had been friends a long time. Their houses—Howard's a modest, half-timbered structure and Al's a Victorian eminence which his grandfather had built fifty years before its surrounding fields had been chopped into half-acre residential lots—stood within the proverbial stone's throw of each other, but the single stone, real or verbal, ever cast in either direction had been one shield by Bitsy at the age of seven.

On that occasion (subsequently referred to in the neighborhood as "the night Bitsy shot a lawyer") the child had slipped out after hours with the intention of summoning Mary Anne to join her in exploring the woods across the road. The little girls had plotted their clandestine adventure for some weeks, and the signal of Bitsy's presence was to be a pebble tossed lightly against Mary Anne's window. But, rattled by darkness, Bitsy had underestimated both the size of her missile and the power behind her heave. And, dazzled, as she looked upward, by the luminaries of heaven, she had forgotten which Cameron window was which. She had sent a rock as big as a pullet's egg into the bathroom where Howard Cameron had been shaving before a dinner meeting of the county bar association.

The stone had come through the pane with a sound like the report of a pistol (and, in fact, as was noted later, it had made a hole as smooth as—if somewhat larger than—one drilled by a bullet), had whizzed within a quarter inch of Howard's ear, and had crashed into the mirror above the washbasin. All Howard's nerves, as if gathered into one gigantic knot, had given a mighty lurch; his razor had slipped, and, staring aghast at his reflection, distorted by splintered glass and a foam of blood and lather, he had cried shrilly: "Julia! I'm a dead man!"

At the sound of his voice, so unlike its usual calm and measured self, and at the horrid import of his words, Bitsy had collapsed upon the hard winter ground.

"I've killed him!" she had moaned in the deep, desolate tone of a hound baying at the moon. "I've killed Mary Anne's daddy!" Then, being a child with a sense of sin and justice, she had begged: "Policeman, take me away! I'm a gangster!"

At length, limp from weeping, she had been put to bed with a hot-water bottle and a pint of ice-cream fetched from the corner drugstore, but it had required a visit from her imagined victim, who looked normal and intact except for the piece of sticking plaster on his left cheek, to console her.

Then, leaping from her bed, she had half strangled him in her embrace and had kissed the seat of his injury with a violence that had almost dislodged the sticking plaster.

While Howard Cameron mowed the lawn, he recalled that little comedy of errors. In it, he reflected, as within the frame of a skilful one-act play, Bitsy's salient qualities had been revealed. And the girl hadn't changed much since then.

Oh, she had learned not to crush your furniture when she sat on it or your hand when she clasped it, but—as witness her attachment to the ridiculous Jones boy—she hadn't learned to gauge or disguise the strength of her passions. And her clumsy candor, which, like crude health, aroused the admiration of an attorney on the verge of middle age, aroused only scorn in the breasts of her contemporaries.

The girl needed time, Howard thought. Unbadgered, al-

lowed to open her petals slowly, one by one, Bitsy would some day blossom into the majesty nature reserved for her. To force her prematurely into an alien pattern—and not even because the pattern was essentially good—was a stupid refinement of cruelty. He wondered that such soft-hearted women as Al's wife and his own Julia would have countenanced the scheme.

The next morning, Howard went to his office early. He had a brief to prepare before court was called, a full day of examining witnesses and challenging jurors, and a dinner conference with a rich, greedy client who wished to break an uncle's will. He returned home just in time to change into the tuxedo, faintly redolent of camphor, that his wife had laid out for him.

As he came downstairs, Mary Anne said, "Hi, Daddykins, you look like a man of distinction. See what Junior Bailey sent me!" She was wearing a blue dress made of some stiff but filmy stuff and she looked sure of herself as she indicated the gardenia in her blond hair. "He's my partner, but I'm going with you and mother. I promised Bitsy to come early."

"How is she?" Howard asked.

"In a daze," Mary Anne said. "Her dress is a dream num-

The ideal woman is one with whom a particular man has the fortune to be in love at a particular moment. The same conditions of time and place also determine the ideal man.

—Clare Boothe Luce

ber. Yards and yards of orange tulle sprinkled with rhinestones. Almost strapless. Her father's sending her a white orchid corsage."

"Good," said Howard.

"And the house!" Mary Anne went on. "They have this spring motif, you know. Even the ice-cream is in the shape of flowers. And they've fixed these trellises in all the corners—kind of bowers where couples can sit out dances. They're covered with paper leaves all stuck with real roses from the florist."

"I hope Bitsy appreciates it," Mrs. Cameron said. "Let's start."

"Mr. Blackburn wanted to have canaries twittering round among the flowers," Mary Anne continued. "But Bitsy said birds had messy habits."

The Camerons walked to the party. The night was warm and still. The moon was nearly full and the fruit trees, blooming all over the neighborhood, were like luminous clouds on the lawns.

The Blackburns' big, cut-glass paneled door was opened by Lucetta, who wore a black taffeta uniform and a lacy cap and apron. Her smile was forced. "Good evening," she said. "My! Mary Anne, you look like you come straight from New York! Mrs. Blackburn said would the ladies step upstairs." She touched Mary Anne's arm. "Put some starch in Bitsy. The poor lamb's in misery." She took Howard's coat. "Mr. Blackburn's on the phone. He'll be here directly, sir."

Howard let his gaze rove the length of the big central hall and into the twin parlors with their folding doors flung open. The carpets had been removed,

the furniture, except for scattered love seats and sofas, carted off, and the bare, waxed floors had a lustre that hurt the eyes.

The shade of the silly bowers that Mary Anne had spoken of looked sinister rather than cosy, and at the end of the hall, under a stained-glass window that had been the pride of the 'eighties, a five-man orchestra was ambushed among potted palms and oleanders.

"How does this strike you, Lucetta?" he asked.

Lucetta's eyes gleamed with the liquid fire that is a special beauty of her race. "Frankly, sir, I'm nervous," she said.

Al Blackburn hurried out from the library. "Greetings, Howie!" he said. "It's a comfort to see you." He clapped Howard on the shoulder. "I have a favor to beg. Gladys doesn't know yet—I just got the call—but we're in a jam."

He explained that the president of the local Building and Loan Association, an elderly gentleman by the name of Edgerton, had suffered a thrombosis and that both he and his wife were wanted at the hospital. If the Camerons would hold the fort . . .

"Sure, Al," Howard said bravely. "And stay as long as you're needed."

"I appreciate that," Al said. "Off the record, I'm in line for Mr. Edgerton's position, and it wouldn't look decent if I didn't show the concern I honestly feel. And Mrs. E. is inclined to be hysterical. She'll need Gladys."

He paused, scanning the spacious room. "I'm almost thankful to miss part of this shindig. I feel hollow—the way I did while Bitsy was being born."

"It's bound to turn out well," Howard assured him.

"It ought to," Al said morosely. "It's costing as much as a wedding."

Mr. and Mrs. Blackburn left as the guests began to arrive. The three Camerons and Bitsy stood together near the door to do the honors. In her full tulle dress Bitsy looked even larger than life. Mary Anne kept poking her in the small of the back to remind her to stand up straight.

"I wish I was dead," Bitsy muttered.

"Be cool," Mary Anne said.

All the girls were dressed much alike in the same sort of fluffy dresses that Mary Anne and Bitsy wore. They acted alike, too. They all said: "Isn't this a perfect night for a dance?" and "This house is like a fairyland" and "Bitsy, your dress is out of this world." And they all said those things in accents that sounded not only false but as if they were meant to sound false—as if a fashionable insincerity were the impression they strove to convey.

The boys, practically indistinguishable from one another in their dark clothes, had their own patter. "How's life been treating you?" they inquired of Howard Cameron in a man-to-man tone. "Feels like summer out," they observed to Julia. "You're mighty dressed up," they told Bitsy.

Only Everett Jones, doubtless against his will, seemed to retain his identity. His face, though he tried to make it blank, wore its usual expression of cynical hauteur. His dinner jacket was a trifle short in the sleeves.

He thrust out his hand in a grudging way. (His palm was clammy to Howard's touch.)

"You look divine, Everett," said Bitsy. "Like a senator or something."

"Don't kid me, big girl," Everett said. He walked away.

The orchestra began to play

the "Tennessee Waltz," slowly and sadly.

"Can't we have a livelier tune to break the ice?" Howard asked.

"No," his daughter said. "Well"—she looked significantly at her mother—"I guess Bits and I ought to circulate."

"We must disappear now," Julia told her husband. "The modern chaperon is invisible."

In the upstairs sitting-room, with the heavy door closed against the dance music, Howard put "Iolanthe" on the record player. After half an hour, he said to his wife, "Hadden't you better take a gander at the kids?"

"Yes," Julia said, "but I dread to." She went out. In a few minutes she returned. "Hardly anybody's dancing," she reported; "just Mary Anne and the Bailey boy and a few couples who're . . ."

She hesitated. "I hate the inelegant expression, but I can't think of a better one—a few couples who're going steady."

"Low language suits a low practice," Howard said. "How's Bitsy doing?"

"She's sitting bolt upright on a sofa in the hall, with a tragic smile on her face. Most of the boys are huddled in one parlor, laughing coarsely. The girls are in the other, on the verge of tears. Everett Jones is leaning against the wall, trying to look like Lord Byron."

"I wish the Blackburns would come back," Howard said. "It's their funeral!"

"I rather hope they won't until the party picks up," his wife said. "It may yet. The evening's young."

Before long there was a rap on the door and Lucetta came in, carrying a tray that held two glasses, soda, and ice. "There's bourbon and Scotch in the liquor cabinet, Mr. Cameron," she said.

"Thanks, Lucetta. I need a drink."

"I could do with a dram myself," said Lucetta.

"Have one, then," said Julia. "No, thank you, ma'am," said Lucetta. "I promised the Lord three years ago that if He'd let me keep my teeth I'd never touch another drop of spirits."

"A rash vow," Howard murmured.

"I kept my teeth," Lucetta said. "I indulge in a can of beer now and then." She twisted her apron. "Oh, Mrs. Cameron, little Bitsy's heart is busting in two!"

"What went wrong?" Howard asked.

"It's like a mean dog smells fear and hounds a person," Lucetta told him. "Them boys know Bitsy's scared and they've set out to spoil her party." She narrowed her eyes. "I'd like to stomp 'em!"

"Send Mary Anne up," Julia said. "Maybe she can help."

Promptly, after the maid's departure, Mary Anne arrived. "The party's a flop!" she cried. "Bitsy's ruined forever! The Blackburns will have to move far, far away! To Alaska or Wisconsin."

"Now, now," said her father.

"Everett did it!" Mary Anne said angrily. "He told all

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Continuing . . .

A Spring Motif

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the boys that dancing was a primitive form of amusement!" "Has Bitsy danced at all?" Howard asked.

"Junior Bailey danced with her once. He always does the correct thing."

"Suppose I go down and suggest a Paul Jones?" Julia said.

"A thousand times no!" Mary Anne exclaimed. "Stay where you are. This isn't a Grade Mothers' Social. This is an adult affair!"

"Don't shout," Julia said. "I merely wished to help."

Mary Anne raised her eyes towards the ceiling. "Nobody can help but God," she said in a stage whisper. On that pious and not very helpful note, she left.

Howard Cameron switched off the phonograph in the middle of the fairies' "tripping hither, tripping thither" chorus. He found a broached bottle of bourbon in the liquor closet. "Would you like one?" he asked his wife as he poured himself a stiff drink.

"No, thanks," she said. "I want to keep my breath pure in case I have to mingle with the guests. But it's stuffy in here. I could use some air."

Howard raised the window. As he did, a blast of wind, scented with new-cut grass and syringa and impending rain, rushed into the room. He lowered the sash with a bang. "A storm's coming fast," he said. "The sky's overcast and there's hairpin lightning on the horizon. We'd better see about the windows downstairs."

When they reached the landing, the Camerons saw that Lucetta, also, had remarked the change of weather. Assisted by the houseboy and two colored janitors borrowed from Al Blackburn's office building, she was closing the windows.

The orchestra was still playing, but in a discouraged way. No one was dancing. One parlor was still crowded with boys and its twin with girls in various attitudes of dejection or transparent nonchalance. Everett was still sneering into space. Bitsy was still on the sofa, but she was no longer smiling. Her face wore a look of purpose, of gathering resolution.

The storm broke. Such thunder as might have heralded the descent of Jove from Olympus clapped its mighty hands above the roof. The music ceased abruptly; one melancholy trombone note wailed and gave up its plaintive ghost.

An eerie tinkling trembled in the air—the sigh of a house in which there are many crystal chandeliers. The guests screamed in mock terror. Everett Jones threw back his head and walled his eyes like a frightened horse.

As if at a signal, Bitsy arose. She swept into the centre of the hall. In her full, besparkled dress she appeared to ride upon a starry, wind-borne cloud. She stuck two fingers between her teeth and emitted a blood-freezing whistle. "Aw right, kids!" she yelled in her old sand-lot voice. "Line up! Boys on that side! Girls on this!"

Started, the children obeyed her.

Bitsy took her place in the exact middle of the rainbow of maidens. Sternly she surveyed the dark row of boys. "Get opposite me, Everett Jones!" she ordered in a clarion tone. "And take your glasses off!"

As if he had lost all power of volition, Everett did as he was told. He stuck his glasses in his pants pocket. A girl giggled.

"Shut up," Bitsy roared.

"Silence in the ranks! Everybody in his battle station!" She lifted her right arm in a commanding gesture. (Given a helmet, Howard Cameron thought, she'd have doubled for the goddess Bellona.) "One. Two. Three. Fight! Men against women!"

There was an instant of shocked surprise. Then, to the accompaniment of coy squeals, the sexes exchanged playful swats. But Bitsy and Everett were in earnest. Silent, crouching, they advanced into the no-man's land between the lines.

Howard rallied to his duty. "Here! Here!" he cried, starting down the stairs.

A second peal of thunder, louder and closer than the first, rent the air. The house was plunged into darkness.

Julia Cameron touched her husband's arm. "You can't save him now," she said. Her tone was complacent.

Lucetta's voice said: "It's a fuse. The box is in the pantry." And for a minute after that everything was so still that Howard could hear the heavy breathing and the scuffling feet as the boys and girls struggled for supremacy. A flash of lightning illuminated the hall. The guests stood in a wide ring around the protagonists.

Everett, his face hideous with rage, had Bitsy by the hair. Bitsy held her fist clenched, like the fist of a gentleman who remembers, come what may, the Queensberry rules.

Bitsy's voice rang out. "Hellbat!" she screeched.

Thunder crashed. Its final reverberation was followed by a less ethereal noise that Howard, from a cursory acquaintance with crime literature, identified as the thud of a falling body.

"She felled him with a left hook," he said.

The lights came on. Everett, limp as a propped-up rag doll, sat against the wall with his spindly legs stuck out before him. Bitsy, composed except for heightened color, stood over him. When the Camerons and Lucetta reached her side, she said: "I didn't give him all I had."

Bitsy was taken upstairs by Mrs. Cameron, Mary Anne, and the maid. Howard, waving aside half a dozen boys, helped Everett to the downstairs lavatory.

"If you'd like to lie down a while—" Howard began.

Everett, holding a cold, wet towel to his jaw, appeared astonished. "No, sir," he said. "It's not broken." His eyes darkened. "I could have killed her."

"You did right to use restraint," Howard told him kindly.

Everett curled his lip. "It wasn't a question of right and wrong," he said. "But there are things a gentleman can't do."

"Precisely," Howard said. "You have the matter of conduct in a nutshell."

Everett put on his glasses, tied his tie, and ran a pocket comb through his hair. "She called me a hellbat," he said musingly. He didn't sound offended.

Returning to the hall with Everett, Howard Cameron noticed that the tempo of the party had changed. With verve and vigor the musicians were playing "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." The guests were in motion.

They were dancing or chasing one another or pulling roses off the artificial vines and flinging them through the air. They all displayed that gaiety, that abandon, that spiritual elevation that is said to have come

to those who have been miraculously delivered from peril.

Bitsy descended the stairs. Her hair was sleek and shining. She held her head high and walked with the dignity of a queen who condescends to share the simple pleasures of her subjects.

Everett, with Howard close on his heels, ready to prevent a renewal of hostilities, approached her. The two children stood face to face. Unsmiling. Taking each other's measure.

"Shall we dance?" said Everett.

Howard saw his wife sitting on the landing. He joined her.

"The storm passed as quickly as it came," she said. "Moon's out."

"The air's cleared in here, too," said Howard.

It was just on midnight—supper had been served, couples had retreated into the dellowed nooks to be hauled out with shrieks of innocent ribaldry by their friends, general happiness had prevailed, and the orchestra was signing off with "Goodnight, Sweetheart"—when Mr. and Mrs. Blackburn returned. They joined the Camerons on the steps.

"We were sorry to miss the fun," Gladys Blackburn said, "but it was touch and go with Mr. Edgerton." With a radiant face, she looked down upon the cowering couples, the rose-strewn floor, and the listing trellises. "It's perfect. Like a madhouse!"

"There was a sound of revelry by night," eh, Howie?" Al said. He looked boyish and taken with himself. He wasn't a man who read much poetry. "Shakespeare?"

"You're warm, Al," said Howard.

When the last guests had gone, the Cameron family walked home in companionable silence through the fresh, lovely night.

The storm had left a charming kind of wreckage on the lawns. Snapped-off heads of daffodils, budding twigs, and a drift of fruit blossoms were littered about like the debris of a successful party.

"Bitsy's on the map," Mary Anne said, as they went into their own house. "Nobody'll ever forget that dance!"

Her mother laughed softly. "What was it she called the Jones boy? A hellbat?"

"She was quoting Daddy, sort of," said Mary Anne.

Julia stroked her husband's cheek. "Everybody quotes him. He's smart," she said. She smiled at him. "But you look tired. I'm going to sit you down in your den and fix you a nice nightcap. You never did finish your drink at the Blackburns."

Ensclosed in his favorite chair, with his shoes off and his feet comfortable in the loose slippers that Mary Anne had brought him, Howard Cameron thought himself the most fortunate of men. His wife came in from the kitchen. On a silver tray she brought a highball for him and two cups of warm milk for herself and Mary Anne.

"What are you looking so salubrious about?" she asked.

"I feel salubrious," Howard said. "I was thinking of Bitsy's triumph and of Woman with a capital W—of her infinite variety!"

Mary Anne sat down on the floor. She rubbed her nose against her father's knee; it was a trick she'd had in her early childhood to denote ecstasy. "That Bitsy Blackburn!" she murmured. "I won't ever have to worry about her again!" She closed her eyes and yawned. "Oh, brother—did she play her hand cool!"

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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY—December 28, 1955

FOR TEENAGERS

Here's your answer

By LOUISE HUNTER

Etiquette often poses problems. Happily there is a very easy way to solve them. Just remember that "etiquette" is only another word for good manners and you will be a credit to yourself.

THIS week's mail includes one on office etiquette, which is often dictated by custom.

I AM a young girl, and in my department at work there are a lot of men. I mix with the women in the next department and call most of them by their Christian names. In my department there is the boss and an old man, both of whom are called 'Mr.' But there are as well a married man about 40, a single man of 40, a married man in his twenties, and two younger men. I call all the last lot by their Christian names, except the married man of 40. He has never asked me to call him by his Christian name, and I am afraid he will think me too formal if I call him 'Mr.' Can you help me, please?" — O.J., Killara, N.S.W.

You are not being too formal when you call this man "Mr." You are simply addressing him correctly. Christian names are now used very freely, but with a young girl it is both forward and ill-mannered to call older people by their Christian names unless you are invited to. Even if it is customary in the office, you'll find you'll get a mark for good manners if you wait till you're asked.

FOR a number of years I have shared the confidence of a charming member of the opposite sex and we are deeply attached to each other. On various fitting occasions I presented to her tokens of friendship such as lipsticks, perfume, stockings, etc., and they have been accepted in the right spirit. I recently presented a small box of soap with lavender perfume, and she objected to the gift. Please tell me have I committed a faux pas? I don't think I have, because in a recent soap advertisement in your paper it said, among other things, 'a



DEBBIE'S RECIPE

DEBBIE, our teenage chef, makes a tasty potato salad this week, ideal for cold, holiday meals.

POTATO SALAD

Six medium-sized potatoes, 1 teaspoon salt, dash cayenne pepper, knob of garlic, 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion, 1½ cups diced celery, 2 tablespoons diced parboiled green or red pepper, ½ cup mayonnaise, 1 dessertspoon lemon juice.

1. Peel and cook potatoes in salted water until tender.
2. Drain; when cold, cut into dice.
3. Wipe around inside of large serving bowl with cut knob of garlic.
4. Add salt, pepper, onion, celery, and green or red pepper to potatoes and fold lightly together in prepared bowl.
5. Fold in mayonnaise and lemon juice, being careful not to break up potato cubes.
6. Cover and chill 1 or 2 hours before serving with crisp lettuce or cress and other salad ingredients.

traditional gift." — B.V.K., Victoria.

You have not committed a faux pas. Girls generally appreciate cosmetic gifts. But perfume of lavender is generally associated with gentle aunts and grannies. Some girls like the fresh lavender, but other prefer headier perfumes. "Charming" doesn't seem to be the right word to describe a girl who disliked your gift and let you know it. She sounds rude and over-confident.

"I AM just learning to dance, and would like to know if it is correct to thank a man after a dance, or if the man says 'Thank you,' what should the girl say?" — LOUISE, Albury, N.S.W.

Always thank a man for an invitation to a dance, even when you can't accept, and thank your partner again when the dance is finished. A smile and a thank you is sufficient, or some simple remark

like "Thank you, I love the samba."

PENFRIENDS

COULD you please ask for some penfriends for us? Some of us don't receive much mail?—The Boys of 105 Fld. Battery, R.A.A., Butterworth, Malaya.

Here are the boys who want the letters: 2/410127, L. G. Robinson, 1/2672 J. Thomas, 4/815 H. J. Hargreaves, 5/1505 F. Ruddick, 1/2705 J. Anderson, 4/1429 R. Kimber, 2/8257 J. Suthers. They all have the same address: 105 Fld. Battery, R.A.A., Butterworth, Malaya.

FIVE lads in the South African Air Force want penfriends. Their names are Edward Paolini, Jimmy Wallace, Barry Coppin, Sarel De Jager, George William. The address of the five lads is: S.A.A.F. T.C., Waterkloof Air Station, P.O., Lyttleton, Pretoria, Transvaal, South Africa.

DISC DIGEST

WHILE every collection includes recordings of piano, violin, vocalists, and orchestras, comparatively few contain anything of the guitar, an instrument which can be most fascinating.

I'D like you to hear the LP "An Evening With Andres Segovia," on CFRIO.729. Segovia, who is a Spaniard, is considered to be the world's greatest exponent of the instrument, and it is his aim to have it recognised as one of the integral solo instruments of the orchestra.

THE music on the discs is very unusual—a suite by Tansman (a Pole), six preludes by Ponce (a Mexican), and "Capriccio Diabolico," by Castel-

nuovo-Tedesco. Unlike many records which you "play out" in a matter of a month or so, this one is so hauntingly subtle that you can play it over and over, and discover it afresh each time.

IF I had to surrender all my Louis Armstrong records except one, I'd choose the last LP to come off the press—"Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five" (330SX.1029). Not only does it present some of the finest jazz sides ever waxed but it is historically important in that it represents the jazz, imported up the Mississippi from New Orleans, which took Chicago by storm.

THERE are 12 numbers, all recorded during 1926

and 1927. "Scat singing" was introduced by Satchmo for the first time in "Heebie Jeebies," and in "Skid-Dat-De-Dat" he used his now famous gravel voice for the first time as an instrument. Two of the tunes are showpieces which are still heard today—"Struttin' With Some Barbecue" and "Ory's Creole Trombone," and, incidentally, you'll hear Kid Ory and Louis indulging in some patter in "Muskrat Ramble," since re-titled "Muskrat" through someone's mistaken sense of dignity. Even if you have these titles on 78's, you'll still want the LP, on which the engineers have done a grand job in filtering out background and surface noises. —BERNARD FLETCHER.



Red... racy... irresistible!

Slightly Scarlet

by CUTEX

A new, dazzling, stormy-sweet shade of scarlet in Cutex "Stayfast" Lipstick and Nail Polish. This is the reddest red ever to flirt on lips and fingertips. Don't wait till tomorrow — try "Slightly Scarlet" tonight — in creamy-smooth, long-lasting Cutex "Stayfast" Lipstick. Put it on, blot gently with a tissue and your lips will stay richly "Slightly Scarlet" for hours longer! Then match up your fingertips with brilliant, gleaming "Slightly Scarlet" Cutex Nail Polish.

CUTEX "SLIGHTLY SCARLET" STAYFAST LIPSTICK, 4/6
CUTEX "SLIGHTLY SCARLET" NAIL POLISH, 2/11 REGULAR
CUTEX "SLIGHTLY SCARLET" NAIL BRILLIANCE, 4/3



L246

me, I haven't. Actually, it's the first time I've come to my senses since Joe died.

"You remember, don't you?" Mrs. Daily went on. "It was just a few days before Christmas that Joe died. Two years ago."

He nodded. "It's a sad time for you."

"I let it be. That first Christmas I wouldn't go anywhere. I stayed home by myself and cried, drank cold coffee, and filled the whole day with tears, asking, 'Why—why?'"

She shook her head. "Nobody knows. But I shouldn't be taking your time."

"I'm not busy. Last year you went to Mrs. Linguist's, didn't you? She was telling me she asked you again this year, but you wouldn't come."

She looked up at him, almost pleadingly. "When you've cooked turkey with all the trimmings, baked your own cake and pies, had your man sitting at the head of your table—when you've done all that for thirty years, being a guest is ashes in your mouth. It's the doing a woman loves, not the eating."

If she could only have had children, Mr. Casey lamented to himself. If she only had some relatives left in the town.

"Joe wouldn't want you spending the day alone," he said.

"No, he wouldn't. And maybe I won't spend it alone." What did she mean?

"I've racked my brains for someone to invite," she said, "but in a small town like this everybody is all fixed up. The sick, the needy, everybody. There might be one or two lonely strangers—I don't know. I couldn't find a soul. So I'm leaving it to the Lord."

"The Lord, Mrs. Daily?"

"Yes, I'll fix the turkey and the trimmings. And I'm hoping that He will provide the guests."

Casey had to say something. "Sure. Sure. He will. But do you think He'll send so many? Sixteen pounds will feed a lot of mouths."

"You just said, yourself, not to count too close. So if you'll just wrap it up—"

"Hadden't you better think it over?" he suggested urgently.

Amusement danced in her eyes. "I have. I guess it's sort of a game I'm playing. Pretending someone will come, so I'll have an excuse to be baking and cooking, the way everybody does at Christmas. But maybe, if I have faith enough, there really will be some folks at my table. Well, I'll know for sure—won't I?—on Christmas Day."

She paid for the turkey and picked up her package. Standing at the window, Mr. Casey watched his little customer struggle with her huge bundle down the street into the dusk.

On Christmas morning Mrs. Daily awakened with the blessed feeling of having a great deal to do. In a flutter of excitement she swung out of bed.

She snapped up the shades and gazed happily at the row of snow-hooded houses across the street. Chimneys were smoking in all of them, and kitchen lights burned against the grey of morning.

She dressed quickly and hurried into her kitchen. It was so still in there. So neat, so empty. She filled her coffee-pot, the small one she had bought after Joe died.

Joe had always got breakfast on Christmas morning, because she had so much else to do. And he had always made a fuss because she started frying the onions for the turkey stuffing before breakfast.

"Onions," he'd growl, "before a man gets a gulp of coffee down his throat."

And they'd laugh together. He'd take her in his arms and she would reluctantly push him away. She was so busy.

Slowly she chunked her bread for the stuffing, adding more and still more until the

Continuing . . . Thanks For a Miracle

pan was heaping. She set it in the oven to crisp. Then she cut her onions.

"These are just cooking tears," she told herself, wiping them away. She put the onions to frying over a slow flame.

"Slowly does it," she thought; "slowly, to a golden-brown. No little black bits in my dressing, thank you."

Then she sat down for her coffee. If she could just reach across the kitchen table to Joe.

Never, in all the years of married life, had Mrs. Daily's cranberry sauce come out so perfect. Never had her pies flaked so superbly. Her bread rose as if with joy rather than yeast. Magic seemed to be in all the making.

By four o'clock her turkey was well on its way, spitting and sizzling in the oven. The sweet potatoes were already baking in their pool of butter.

She opened her table to almost its fullest length and laid her cloth. She put one plate down, with its accompanying silver, glassware, and napery.

"I'll add a plate if . . . A small, depressing shiver chilled her.

To stifle her doubts, she went into the bedroom to dress.

At twenty minutes to six she pinched the leg of the turkey. Almost. Just a few more minutes. Her head was aching. Her hands were cold.

She looked at the clock. Ten minutes to six.

"Well," she said aloud, "well, Isabelle Daily . . ." But she could not think words. Her mind was glued to the front door. She was listening, listening hard, as if the sounds of her cookery might mute the jingling of the doorbell.

Suddenly a blast of wind rattled the windows. And the kitchen clock whirled and pointed straight to six.

The doorbell rang.

She jumped, dropping her oven cloth, then stood still, trembling, until the bell rang again. She pulled off her apron, straightened her hair. Her heart was beating hard.

She went to the door and opened it.

A young man stood there. She did not know him, but she liked his looks. Brown hair, nice, laughing eyes.

"Good evening, Mrs. Daily," he said in a drawing, rich-fibred voice.

"Good evening."

He moved forward, and she stumbled aside to let him in.

"I'm not late, am I?" he asked.

"No. That is—no."

He handed her a package. Plainly, a box of candy.

"Hope you like this kind. Where shall I hang my coat?"

"Right—right in there, Mr. . . ."

He smiled. "Sam. My name is Sam. I'd forgotten you wouldn't know."

"Please sit down, Mr. Sam. I was just going to take the turkey out of the oven."

"It smells awfully good."

"I think it's all right. I hope you are hungry."

"I'm starved. I don't think I have ever looked forward to a Christmas dinner as much as this one."

She almost ran into the kitchen.

"Should I ask him anything?" she wondered. "And what would I say? He seems to know and—where is my oven cloth?"

Before she could find it, the doorbell rang again. Shock lashed through her being.

"I'll answer it," Sam called.

She edged towards the front room and saw him opening the door. Wind and snow snatched at him as he stepped aside to let a young lady in. Such a pretty young lady, who looked surprised to see him.

"Isn't this where Mrs. Daily lives?"

"Yes. She's busy in the kitchen. She's expecting you."

"Expecting me?"

"Of course. Let me take your coat."

She slipped off her coat. "Strange," she said.

"What is?"

"I thought I would be the only one here."

"Why?"

By this time, Mrs. Daily's feet were taking her towards her guest, who seemed as ill at ease as she was herself.

"I am so glad you are here," Mrs. Daily said, nervousness making her voice a squeak.

"Thank you," the young lady whispered.

"Of course, you two do not know each other. This is Sam, Miss—"

"Edith."

"Hello, Edith." Sam alone was calm and happy.

"Hello, Sam."

Mrs. Daily twittered on, "I'll bring some hot almonds and a fruit drink. I'll be serving in just a few minutes." She felt that she was flying to pieces. "It's just that I've never had a miracle before."

"Expecting more guests?" Sam asked.

Mrs. Daily hated to say it, but what could she do? "I don't know."

"Of course you don't," he assured her, "but if no one else comes, all the more turkey

from page 3

When they came into the dining-room, she motioned Sam to Joe's chair and asked him to carve. Edith helped her bring in the wonderful food. Johnny drooled.

They sat down, and tremblingly Mrs. Daily said grace.

Nothing is a miracle. Everything is.

Mrs. Daily's thoughts hopped like a bird over the events of the day as they sat around the fireplace after dinner. They had laughed often. Among the three older ones there was a gay, unspoken promise to let their little thread of mystery keep spinning. "Let's go on this way for a while," their eyes urged one another.

The comfortable evening was rolling around the hours to its finish. Mrs. Daily looked at Sam. Who was he? What small happenings had hooked together to bring him to her table? Just now he was smoking his pipe, head down and frowning into the fire.

Edith, too, sat quietly. Yet her expression was tense, watchful, as if she was waiting for something to happen.

"Isn't it pleasant?" thought Mrs. Daily. "And exciting?"

Would her guests go away after a little while to separate paths?



for us . . . Hey! There's the bell."

This time Mrs. Daily went herself. She had plunged herself into this madness and would carry on. She flung open the door.

Relief, great relief, spilled over her. It was only Johnny Williams, her neighbors' fourteen-year-old nephew, who was visiting them for the holiday.

He had come to borrow something, she was sure.

"I am not late, am I? Aunt Sophie said six."

Mrs. Daily felt her knees bend. "Are you having dinner here, Johnny?"

"Sure. You're expecting me, aren't you?"

"Yes, of course. But what about the folks?"

"Aunt Sophie went to hospital. The baby's coming . . . Say, it smells good in here!"

Mrs. Daily tried to straighten her thoughts out. She hadn't remembered being specific in her prayers for guests. And she was mighty glad to have Johnny; it was comforting to have a familiar person here.

Johnny was staring. "Company? Aunt Sophie said I'd be the only one."

Sam came up and told him his name, and Edith came, too, holding a bowl of almonds out to Johnny.

They munched away for a while, making conversation. It didn't go badly. Sam seemed to know how to relax them all.

He seemed to be the general manager of the whole affair. Mrs. Daily wished she knew a little something about him.

"I think, Mrs. Daily," he said, "that all your guests have assembled."

"Yes, I'm sure of it, too. I'll put the dinner right on."

much trouble and fear now. But today everybody's come to dinner—to be glad they have their families, or, at least, their homes. It makes us all feel strong again. Oh, I'd hate to lose Christmas!"

"I've never made much of the day," Edith said quietly. "I'm a nurse. I always manage to be on duty, because I have no place to go."

Mrs. Daily's excitement began to press against her restraint. "Have you no family?" she asked breathlessly.

"No. I'm alone."

There, thought Mrs. Daily, and took a sly look at Sam. She saw his head come up in quick questioning.

These two nice people and both alone. Could it not mean romance? . . . "But, good heavens!" she thought, retreating. "I must not make a fool of myself. We are excited, all of us. There is mystery and magic here, if only for just a little while."

And, a little sadly, she waited for the words that would break the spell.

Sam got up and walked over to the window. Parting the curtains, he looked at the houses across the street, wrapped in great shawls of snow, their windows streaming hospitable bands of light.

"It would be a great world if it was all like this," Sam said, closing the curtain, and turning towards them. "It fools you. You forget the wars, the bombs. You forget how confused the world is, and you try to clump Christmas on to it. What for?"

How, thought Mrs. Daily, could she make him feel what she felt? There it was, in this room—and beyond this room—spreading wider and wider to the edges of the land. But it started here. With home. With firelight on a girl's dress. With a bowl of apples. With love. With a drowsy boy who is unafraid.

"My patient died this morning," Edith's voice fell softly into the room. "Even though he was very old, we thought it would not be for a while. We were planning Christmas for him. Do you know, right up to the end he scolded the world? It was a rotten place, he said. It would crumble in its own rottenness."

"Aw, everybody talks like that," Johnny broke in. "Even the older kids at school."

"Yes, everybody talks like that," Edith answered, smiling at Sam. You, too, her smile said. Then, almost unwillingly, she spoke again:

"If he had known that he had had his last Christmas . . . if he had known that the book I had read to him was the last book in his life . . ."

that the little song his granddaughter learned at school would be the last song he'd ever hear . . . this snowfall, the last beautiful thing he'd ever see . . . wouldn't each simple thing have seemed wonderful to him? Wouldn't he have felt thankful for them all?"

Sam knocked the ashes out of his pipe. "There's a lot to be said for first times, too, Edith," he said quietly.

Mrs. Daily's heart winged to her throat. "The way he looks at her shows that he likes her, anyway. The way she won't look at him shows she likes him, too." She was afraid to stir lest the thin thread of magic be snapped.

Sam broke into her thoughts: "The first time a man finds this"—his hand swept to include them and the room and the firelight—"and begins to know that it is the answer to his fears and his dreams . . ."

He stopped then, splintered the mood with a quick laugh.

"Mrs. Daily," he said, "I don't think they can make an atom bomb big enough to smash this room!"

There was the sound of bells jingling in the street and Johnny flew to the door. "It's a sleigh and horses!" he called out.

Mrs. Daily came to look, too. "Oh, that's Mr. Casey's old sleigh. Used to belong to his father. He keeps it to give children a ride on special days when there's snow enough."

Edith and Sam came to the door.

"Goodness!" Edith exclaimed. "That brings back my childhood. Listen to those bells!"

They had to close the door. They were all shivering.

"That Mr. Casey is a wonderful man," Edith said, her teeth chattering still from the cold.

"Now," thought Mrs. Daily, "the spell is ended." Mr. Casey, of course. No need to hold back questions now. The answer was coming, the disenchanting prosaic answer. She asked quietly, "Do you know him?"

"No," Edith answered. "But I called him this morning. It was a shame. I had to call him at his house to ask if he would take the turkey back. I knew the Gables wouldn't use it."

An old man died.

"Oh, then it was Grandpa Gable. I'm sorry. I had heard they'd sent to the city for a nurse."

Thump! Thump! All the pieces falling into place.

"I asked Mr. Casey about a place to get dinner. The only bus had left for the city. And I could just feel that the Gables wanted to be alone. He told me about you—"

"Gosh, that makes two turkeys he took back," Johnny told them. "Aunt Sophie called him about hers when she found she couldn't cook it."

A child was being born.

"Is Mr. Casey a tall, thin man, with quite a shock of grey hair?" Sam asked.

"Yes."

"Then that's the man I overheard talking to the hotel clerk. He was asking if there was anyone around who had no place to go for dinner. He had a most unusual invitation," Sam grinned. "For the uninvited. It sounded like a great story. And, after all, I'm a newspaperman."

"Did you get a story?" Mrs. Daily asked shyly.

"Mrs. Daily," he said earnestly, "the story I got will be a headliner for me the rest of my life . . ."

Mr. Casey's cheerful bells jingled faintly in the distance as Edith and Sam stood ready to go. Sam turned to Edith: "I'm driving to the city early tomorrow morning. If you'd care to come along—"

Then Edith did look up at him. "I'd love to," she said.

She turned to Mrs. Daily and said, "How can I ever thank you for this wonderful evening?" But her eyes said, "Thank her for a whole bright new world, all a-tremble with wonderful things."

"Goodbye, Mrs. Daily," Sam hugged her gently. "Thanks for the miracle."

He opened the door, and the two nice young people walked out together. It had stopped snowing, but Edith took Sam's arm. There was ice on the walk. They huddled together and moved towards Sam's car.

"Goodbye, goodbye!" Mrs. Daily and Johnny called, waving.

Later, sitting at the kitchen table, Mrs. Daily made thick turkey sandwiches for Johnny. Such juicy turkey. Such fine, crusty bread.

It was a miracle, she thought, even if Mr. Casey did do the Lord's work for Him.

She stopped a moment to glance out of the kitchen window at the pleasant houses, looking so safe, so brightly lighted across the street.

(Copyright)

Girl in the Red Velvet Swing



RAY MILLAND
as Stanford
White, the noted
architect who lost
his life in pur-
suit of Evelyn
Nesbit (Joan
Collins).



GALE ROBBINS
as Gwen Arden,
Broadway show-
girl who intro-
duces Evelyn Nes-
bit to Stanford
White in this opu-
lent picture.



FARLEY
GRANGER
as unstable Harry K. Thaw.
Heir to a huge fortune,
Thaw marries Evelyn Nesbit.



British actress Joan Collins (pictured above as the girl in the red velvet swing of the film title) plays Evelyn Nesbit, lovely model and showgirl of the 1900s and the central character in Fox's lavish CinemaScope version of the triangle drama that became a national scandal. The story tells how Evelyn, in love with wealthy socialite Stanford White (Ray Milland), marries spoiled playboy Harry K. Thaw (Farley Granger). One night in June, 1906, Thaw shoots his rival in a fit of jealousy. He stands trial for his life.



If she takes
a pride in her
linen cupboard
give her

Finlay's sheets



There's so much she can be proud of when she possesses Finlay's Sheets, for she knows that they are a perfected product with an inheritance of over two hundred years of experience in sheet making. Finlay's Sheets and Pillowcases, in plain and twill weave, are made from pure cotton, woven and bleached in the Scottish Highlands by the skillful Scots. They're available in sparkling white, blue, primrose, apricot, nil green, rose and dark rose, so choose her favourite colour for an ideal gift!



IN WHITE AND
DECORATOR COLOURS

Sheet beauty you must see to appreciate; and remember, it's an old Scottish custom to date your Finlay's Sheets to see how long they'll wear!

Also ask for Finlay's genuine Scottish Window Hollands—they're guaranteed fadeless!

MADE IN SCOTLAND **FINLAY'S FAMOUS SHEETS**

Ballerina as star of new musical

From BILL STRUTTON, in London

Shooting has recently finished at Elstree on a color musical which will at last turn one of the world's most beautiful women into a first-magnitude star.

THE film is "Oh, Rosalinda!" and its leading star—she has the feminine billing all to herself this time—is the gorgeous, raven-haired Ludmilla Tcherina.

Ludmilla, half-Russian, half-French, and a great European ballet star, has flitted dilettante-like in and out of films for the past 10 years without ever making a serious bid for top stardom.

She first attracted real attention in "Red Shoes," went on to steal the show in "Tales of Hoffmann," and now receives her just deserts, at the hands of the producers, with promotion to top stardom in "Oh, Rosalinda!," a modernised and highly coloured screen version of the operetta "Die Fledermaus."

It's a lighthearted story of an American, an Englishman, a Russian, a Frenchman, and a Viennese told against a background of Vienna, 1955.

All through the making of "Oh, Rosalinda!" a large sign on the set has frowned on the assembled company. It said:

"Anyone speaking to Madame Tcherina in French will be liable to a fine of one shilling per word." This was a device of director Michael Powell's to persuade Tcherina to improve her English.

In spite of her several previous appearances in British films, she has never got down to mastering the language. In her first British film, in fact, she just memorised her lines phonetically and spouted them like a parrot. It's not that Ludmilla is lazy. Just that she's always been very busy.

Now she is married to French industrialist Raymond Roi, and spends part of each year on his estate in Morocco.

And that is also the reason why Ludmilla Tcherina has never, until now, reached top billing in films. Europe knows her better as a star and creator of ballets which she danced with her late husband, Edmund Audran. They used to tour the world together until his tragic death in a car crash in 1951. After that she did not dance either on stage or in films for well over a year.

People who saw her show-stealing performance as the



ACTRESS-BALLERINA Ludmilla Tcherina, who stars as Rosalinda in the Powell-Pressburger production "Oh, Rosalinda!", watches while stylist A. G. Scott puts finishing touches to her blonded hair-do, Michael Redgrave, Anthony Quayle, and Anton Wallbrook are co-stars.

siren of "Tales of Hoffmann" were astounded that this wasn't followed immediately by a string of dazzling star roles.

Here is Ludmilla's reason, told in still heavily accented English. "Wit' me, dancing comes first. But I like to film, especially something suitable—like thees new film." It is, in fact, her eleventh screen assignment in a roster which includes pictures in French, Italian, Spanish, and English.

When I interviewed her, Ludmilla had just returned from filming opposite Jack Palance in "Sign of the Pagan" (the film has been released in Australia) and had been getting on fine with Hollywood till the script required some rather gymnastic

acting from her in rough-and-tumble love scenes with Palance.

Tcherina reserves for that episode a mere lofty shrug and a faint flash of her black eyes. But at the time, they say, the sparks flew.

She is a fascinating and vivacious talker, but Hollywood bewildered her. The rapid marriages without preliminaries, for instance, dismayed her. She spread her hands and said, wide-eyed: "Americans are always asking to marry one another. Compared with that, the French way is almost... stately. In Hollywood I heard a man asking a girl to marry him while they were swimming in a pool!"

Not content with choreography, dancing, and acting, Tcherina has just held a one-woman art show in Paris of her flamboyant, gouache paintings. These are mildly surrealistic, highly colored, and, like Tcherina, dynamic. But since she remains a bit of an enigma to people, a French screen magazine hit on the idea of hiring a celebrated psychoanalyst to "discover the real Tcherina" by analysing her painting.

Reported this famous worthy: "Colors and technique reveal an ardor, an intelligence always on the alert, greedy for knowledge... loves music... in her dancing figures there is desire and an unsatisfied sensuality... the painter, a woman, while remaining outwardly calm and simple, probably chose painting to express and be rid of her wildest dreams... she has a need to be dominated, is conscious of not being entirely understood, and is anxious to be..."

If all these things are so, the dazzling Tcherina has been more revealing about herself with a paintbrush than with any columnist. To these latter she says flippantly, "My hobbies? Eating spaghetti. I adore it. Unfortunately as a dancer I cannot eat much of it."

"Dancing 'Giselle' at La Scala in Milan recently was torture for me. Everywhere I went in Milan people were filling their mouths with spaghetti."

"That is one reason why I look forward to retiring. Thees I shall do when I am about, well, thirty-eight, I t'ink."

She flung her arms wide and gave a brilliant smile. "Zen I shall eat everyting I want—just everyting!"

Talking of Films

By M. J. McMAHON

★ ★ 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

THE latest all-live-action product of Walt Disney to reach local screens is R.K.O.'s "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea."

A well-made, two-hour-long fantasy adventure based on Jules Verne's early novel about a monster submarine, the picture has appeal for children as well as interest for grown-ups.

It is amazing to think that many of the author's predictions, which were pure fantasy to his contemporary world, have since been fulfilled.

Disney's central character—that of the embittered, anti-social Captain Nemo, whose genius is behind the construction and functioning of the wonder submarine Nautilus—is strongly played by James Mason.

Paul Lukas narrates the story and also enacts the part of the French professor who is captured by Captain Nemo.

Peter Lorre has an unusual role as the professor's assistant, and Kirk Douglas is the swash-buckling harpooner Ned Land.

But more than anything it is the technical brilliance of the special effects and the picturesque underwater photography that anchor audience attention.

A word of praise is due, too, for the re-creation of some of Verne's descriptions as, for ex-

ample, the stateroom in Nautilus with its pipe-organ and red plush Victorian furnishings.

★ The Tall Men

FOX'S new Western, "The Tall Men," is pretty much a routine job in spite of its big star cast and the dollars that have been poured into color CinemaScope window-dressing.

There is little that is fresh or inventive about this story of a big cattle drive from Texas into Montana.

Still, Clark Gable fans will probably vote it acceptable enough, for the picture gives him the chance to revert to a popular, stereotyped character—that of a sturdy adventurer who sits easily in the saddle and is quick with a

OUR FILM GRADINGS

- ★★★ Excellent
- ★★ Above average
- ★ Average
- No stars—below average

gun for an enemy and a grin for a pretty girl.

For the trail, Gable, the rugged cattleman who "dreams little," has as his companions Jane Russell's cheerful hoyden and Robert Ryan, a smooth operator who "dreams big."

Ryan seems less at home in this rugged world of action and turnabout romance than you might expect.

Cameron Mitchell plays Gable's trigger-happy brother. He is the hothead of the party who stops a brace of Indian arrows.

The highlight of the picture is the stampede in which a stream of horses and horn-tossing cattle surge through an Indian ambush.

Studio news

GLORIA DE HAVEN has switched her working place from sound-stage to college kitchen. Taking a rest from films, the blond star has enrolled in a course of domestic science at the University of Miami.

JACK HAWKINS is now going to be an air hero. This should make him the greatest all-rounder in screen heroism Britain has ever produced. We

shall next see his jutting jaw and craggy determination in "The Man in the Sky," which Ealing is planning for him. In this he will be a test pilot.

ROCK HUDSON'S European honeymoon with his bride, Phyllis, is being delayed by two things—two new pictures which the actor must complete before leaving Hollywood.

High-flying love story

Continuing . . . Sally and the Christmas Angel

(from page 9)



★ Ealing's modern color romance "Out of the Clouds" is set against the busy background of London Airport, and covers a period of 24 hours.

David Knight and Margo Lorenz play the romantic leads; Anthony Steel, Robert Beatty, and James Robertson Justice have main character supporting roles.

The story shows some of the technical, human, dramatic, and humorous problems encountered in organising the round-the-clock flow of passengers and planes through Britain's enormous world air terminal.

1 PILOT Gus Randall (Anthony Steel), second right, takes crew through customs before departure. He is reminded of their dinner date by Penny, the stewardess (Eunice Gayson). This is overheard by Duty-Officer Nick Millbourne (Robert Beatty), right, who is in love with Penny.



2 AMUSED that they must remain in a railed-off part of the airport restaurant because of visa trouble are Bill Steiner (David Knight), an American engineer going to the Middle East, and Leah Roche (Margo Lorenz), a European girl who is on her way to America and a safe marriage.



3 BOTH travellers are grounded by bad weather. Bill makes no attempt to conceal his pleasure at seeing Leah again. They set about getting accommodation for the night.



4 WARM welcome is extended by the proprietress of the river pub (Megs Jenkins), where they billet. Attraction grows as the couple learn more about each other, but Leah holds to her marriage plan.



5 IN CAIRO Gus and Penny meet as arranged, but she turns down his marriage proposal, after all. Meanwhile, Nick, who wants to return to the flying he loves, finds it difficult to be convinced that he is doing an essential job as Duty-Officer on the ground.



6 A JOYFUL reunion of Bill and Leah takes place at London Airport when Bill turns back from his trip determined to follow her to America. Leah has purposely missed her flight. Nick arranges to put them on the next plane together.



7 NICK and Penny find a happy ending, too, when he finds that Penny prefers to share her future not with a pilot with a fondness for pretty girls and racehorses but with a man who has both feet firmly planted on the ground.

name, although it had never occurred to me as being out of the way before. She asked all sorts of questions about Heaven, which of course I couldn't answer. But she eventually grasped my reason for being on the plane.

"So you have to sort out a human problem by midnight tonight?" she said. She whistled gently. "Boy, is that an assignment!" She was still rubbing my wing and it hurt rather. "But you don't understand about human beings, do you?"

She sounded patronising and I was rather huffed. Then I remembered what Raphael had said. So I swallowed my pride and asked her to tell me about humans as humbly as I could.

"Well," she told, "if you start sorting out one life you have to sort out all the others. We all depend on one another. Like links in a chain or something. Oh, dear, I'm putting it very badly. Take Dame Beatrice, for example."

After what I had seen of Dame Beatrice and her imperious summons as soon as she saw Sally occupied by someone of her own age, I didn't want to take Dame Beatrice anywhere. But I swallowed again and said, "Yes."

"Well, she's a lonely old woman who pretends to be dedicated to her art."

"Art?"

"Well, music. She's a concert pianist. You know. Don't you have music in heaven? I thought you had lots. Well, she sort of depends on me and bullying me and all that. Because I'm all she's got she can be sure of."

"Really, what she would like is a husband and lots and lots of children and a Christmas tree and everybody very happy and her just playing the piano for them to sing carols. But she can't own up to this, so she pretends that music is all she wants. And she gets worse and worse every Christmas."

She gave me a little hug here and a tear ran down her face and splashed on my wing. "I'm so sorry for her that I can't escape," said young Sally. "I would like a baby. A son with a face like yours. And I think if I put it off another year I shall die."

"Well," I said in the end, "so that's Dame Beatrice."

"I believe there was a Mr. Canterbury once," said Sally thoughtfully. "But he got so sick of the concerts that he went away. Sometimes he sends her Christmas cards. She got one today, just as we were leaving New York. Postmarked Newcastle-on-Tyne. He must follow her quite closely in the newspapers."

Sally sounded wistful. "Of course we do get photographed a lot," she said. "And it is a very glamorous job. All the girls at the agency were ever so envious when I got it. And I do get lots of letters from my friends, I suppose. And it is romantic seeing Chicago and Boston and Australia and New Zealand and all those places."

"But, oh dear, I do wish we would stay somewhere for more than a week so that I could get to know someone of my own age. All the time it's just these terribly intelligent music critics and accompanists and conductors and impresarios and things. I should like some nice friends of my own age."

And now more than one tear fell on my wing.

"Men friends," I said tentatively.

"Well, of course, men friends," she said. "What other sort of friends would a girl of my age like?" She sniffed here and blew her nose. "I must say I'm not half taking you for granted. But as it's all a dream I suppose it doesn't matter what

I tell you. Doesn't matter what you say in a dream." And she looked quite defiant.

"I must find you some men friends," I said. "What about the Second Pilot I saw Dame Beatrice snatch you away from? He is very handsome, isn't he? I heard him suggest you should have a drink with him in the bar."

"He's married," said Sally. "He's no good. Besides, who would want to marry a pilot?"

"Think of the speed," I said.

"That's just what I am thinking of," said Sally. "If you want to find me a husband, somebody else's won't do. No, cherub. You must do better than that."

We went back to our seats then; Sally to comparative purgatory beside Dame Beatrice, me to my—well, I mustn't say it, dear little niche in the rack. As Sally and I came up the aisle together I noticed the leggy young American, Andrew K. Pulsen, sprawled half across the gangway.

"What about him?" I whispered. Sally blushed a fiery red. "Sh . . .," she said, and pursed her lips. "Certainly not," she went on, all in a rush. "He's pompous, boring, priggish. Besides, he's a nuclear physicist. Couldn't live in the same house with it."

"But is it married?" I insisted.

"Well, no," Sally had to admit. "But . . ."

I MUST say, she was very choosy. She had something quite rude to say about every young man I showed her. There was a nice young Canadian, but he was too nice and too young. Then there was a distinguished Englishman, but he was too old.

Eventually, I was so annoyed with her that I stopped trying. I went to sleep in a paper bag. It had the remains of a sandwich, an orange, and a sausage roll in it besides me. It was while I was dozing fitfully, around six in the morning, that I woke up and found myself staring up into the round, bespectacled eyes of Andrew K. Pulsen.

"I observed you talking to Miss Sally . . . Er, that very pretty young lady who is travelling with Dame Beatrice. So I took the liberty of removing you, sir, paper bag and all. I imagine you are some kind of angel. I work in our atom bomb plant at Arizona. I have always had the deepest interest in angelology. Andrew K. Pulsen, sir, at your service."

Sally was right. He was pompous. But he could see me. So his heart was young. Perhaps he was only shy? He had beautiful teeth when he smiled.

"Take your glasses off . . ."

I said. He obeyed, surprised. "There . . ." I said. "You're much better-looking than the Second Pilot. Why do you wear those things?"

"I wear them to look older. Partly for my work, you see, to impress my colleagues. But also . . ." He coughed. "Don't you think, sir, that I am too boyish to attract the females?"

"If I know anything about the females, a boy is what they want. Those glasses will just keep them away. Anyway, I think you look younger with them than without. Like a very young owl."

So he put them away in his pocket.

"I wish you'd tell me how many seraphim there are and what they look like. That's what I really want to know."

I was stern with him.

"You bought that girl I was

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Sally and the Christmas Angel

Continuing

from page 37

talking to a cup of coffee at Gander," I said.
He bit his lip.
"I'm afraid I did," he said.
"But she snubbed me."

"She won't snub you without your glasses," I said. "Now look. As you probably know, you student of angels, the only people who can see me are the young in heart. There haven't been so many of them on this trip so far. But Sally has told me there are all sorts of ghastly risks attached to smuggled livestock arriving from abroad. Quarantine and things like that. So I can't afford to take a chance on the Customs officer being old in heart."

"Dame Beatrice bought a rare old framed mirror in Chicago. Genuine antique. Blooming with cherubs and wings and things. If I stay on the frame of that they'll think I'm just incidental, even if they do see me. But it's far too heavy for Sally to carry. You keep your glasses off and carry me through — and Miss Sally will feel very differently about you. You see if she doesn't."

Andrew K. Pulsen rubbed his nose with the back of his hand.
"Why, sure," he said. "But how'll I get hold of this mirror?"

"For crying out loud," I said. "Sally will be struggling with it. It will be far too heavy for her. You just walk up and take it. Masterfully. None of this nonsense about 'Excuse me' or anything."

"Oh..." Andrew K. Pulsen seemed a little worried. "Oh. O.K."

I went back to Sally and blew in her face. She woke up with a little cry. Dame Beatrice stirred.

"Oh," said Sally. "So the dream's still on, is it?"

"Listen," I said. "You silly girl. That paper bag you put me in smelt. Put me in with your aunt's mirror."

Dame Beatrice had woken; she was staring round the plane with glazed, sleepy eyes.

"She's not my aunt," said Sally in a furious whisper.

"My dear," said Dame Beatrice with icy calm. She was still a beautiful woman, for all her fifty-odd years, but she was very angry and her soft voice, that should have sounded like the cooing of doves, was instead as cold as the steel of an archangel's sword.

"My dear child, it is the mark of a highly inferior intellect, if not of a halfwit, to sit and talk to yourself," she said. "I feel terrible," she said. "My sinus again." She sighed. Of course, she couldn't see me. Her heart had been tight shut for years and years, growing older and older.

Sally stole out of her seat. The mirror, too fragile, too rare to be stowed with the heavy baggage, was among Her Dameship's personal luggage, causing great inconvenience to everyone in the aisle. So I fluttered to the top of it and stayed there, all among the most ornate carvings of all.

So I was carried in some triumph through the sheds at London Airport. First, tottering, by Sally. Then, sturdily and stoutly, by Andrew K. Pulsen, who paid (I was gratified to see) duty on me to the tune of £5/6/7½. And finally by an employee of the airline, evidently young in heart, for when I took off on the first leg of my record-breaking flight to Newcastle-on-Tyne to find Mister Canterbury he ejaculated: "Cor... suffering snakes. Fluttering pigeons with human faces."

I was worried as I left on my flight to find Mr. Canterbury in Newcastle. They were all such asses I was afraid they would get themselves tangled up again without me to help them. And

I had precious little time left to sort them out...

Mr. Canterbury was a charming fellow. He was sitting at an upright piano, covered with photographs of Dame Beatrice in silver frames. He was playing "Once in Royal David's City" to himself rather badly. It was a cosy room, where a gas-fire bubbled to itself, where a "raggy" mat lay in front of the fire, where there was an enormous book of Press cuttings, a pot of paste and a brush lying on a little table.

There were several cuttings waiting to be pasted in. They were all about Dame Beatrice's tour in America. It was about eleven in the morning when I flew in the window—Christmas morning. The bells of the cathedral were ringing out a tremendous chime, and all over that grey northern city the bells were answering one another. It was beautiful.

"Hallo," said Mr. Canterbury, swinging round on the piano stool. "A cherub. Good. You can sing descant then." And he plunged into a Christmas song, "When the Crimson Sun had Set." I must admit I enjoyed it, too. He sang with such verve that all the photographs on the piano rattled and shook for joy. At the end of it he slammed down his hands in a triumphant "Ah-men." And he grinned at me.

"Eh, lad," said Mr. Canterbury. He had a slight North Country accent. He was about fifty. He wore a very nice suit. He looked prosperous. He had

Christmas Day. So I told him, rapidly, about what Raphael had said about my love of speed and my conceit.

"And then there's Sally, Mr. Canterbury," I said rather breathlessly.

"Sally?" said Mr. Canterbury, sitting up. "Just call me Ben. Who's Sally?"

"Sally is her secretary. Sally is a poppet. But travelling round with Her Dameship she doesn't get a chance to meet any boys. And she was beastly to Andrew K. Pulsen to begin with. And although she was being nice to him when I left, she may well be being beastly to him again now. And if Sally leaves to get married Dame Beatrice will have to find another secretary, who may not be as fond of her as Sally is..." I had to stop for breath here and realised something much worse. "Or she will stop Sally marrying him," I said.

Ben Canterbury walked to the front door, clapped on a bowler hat, and seized an umbrella.

"Where are you going?" I said, darting after him.

"London," he said. "Where else? In a train as God intended."

"But that will be too late," I wailed. "Too late for me, that is. I must get you all sorted out by midnight, or else..."

"Or else what?"

"I don't know—that's what is so terrifying about heaven."

"Well, then, how can we get to London quicker?"

"In one of them danged aeroplanes."

"I'd die sooner," said Ben Canterbury. But he came just the same.

The only plane he could charter was an aged affair that pattered off from the field at about 100 miles an hour. Lamentably slow. Oh, I nearly went crazy trying to speed it up. I must say, Ben Canterbury was game. He was obviously terrified. But once he was up in the air, with his bowler hat crammed down on his forehead and me buttoned into his waistcoat (he said I tickled), he settled down very well. It was pretty late in the afternoon when we got to Dame Beatrice's house. We travelled most of the way from London Airport in an aged (slow, slow) taxi. The driver, who was young in heart but very short-sighted, thought I was a pigeon. But eventually we did arrive at the enormous sad house where Dame Beatrice lived when she deigned to settle in London for five minutes.

It was a large, cold, dark house with a carriage sweep up to the front door among laurel bushes. On either side were houses where windows blazed, where gay music played, where children laughed and Christmas trees twinkled gloriously out into the night. This only made Dame Beatrice's house look darker, sadder. Only an oblong golden square of light at the top right-hand corner of the house suggested a room with shaded lights, lights that might flatter a woman of unkind years.

"What shall we do?" asked Ben. "It all looks so gloom. Wish I hadn't left in such a flap. I'd have brought some flowers if I'd thought. Some presents, too. Wonder if we could buy a tree down here, late as this. I'd know where to go to home. Ooh, hark at the waits... Aren't they pretty?"

On the brittle winter air, that promised more snow later, came the faint "Poom... poom" of a euphonium, accompanying a cornet and other assorted musical instruments.

"Got an idea," said Ben. He

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a charming grin. And he took me for granted. Didn't say I was a dream or anything insulting like that. I liked him.

"Now," he said. "What can I do for you?"

"It's your wife," I began rather clumsily. He leapt up. The piano stool went over with a crash. His face had gone rather red.

"Not dead? Had an accident? Those danged aeroplanes," he cried. "I knew they'd be the death of her..." He tried to grab me by one ear.

"No, no," I said, dodging. "She's perfectly well. She's in London. But I think she needs you. I'll take you there."

"Bea needs me?" He sat down with a thump on the sofa. "Take me there? Dear lad. It just isn't likely. Eh, it's not fair sending cherubs to plague a chap, and on Christmas morning, too." To my horror his chin began to tremble. He took a pocket handkerchief out of his sleeve and blew his nose. "I'm better off where I am, just readin' her Press cuttings and remembering." He suddenly brightened. "And she'd never let me play the piano," he said.

I was vexed with him. After all, I'd had a long, cold flight, even if I had been able to put into operation some of the new theories I had learnt from the jet airliner. I didn't see why my plan should be spoilt by a pig-headed North Country man. I said so. Suddenly I remembered how bossy Sally had turned quite kind when I explained about my task for

AS I READ THE STARS

by Eve Hilliard
For week beginning Dec. 26

Your Sign Your Luck Your Job Your Home Your Heart Socially

ARIES The Ram MARCH 21 - APRIL 20	★ Lucky number this week, 4. Lucky colors for love, art shades. Gambling colors, yellow, navy-blue. Lucky days, Monday, Wednesday. There's luck in being tactful.	★ You're indispensable. Your presence is requested everywhere. You've never worked so hard in your life, but you are adding to your prestige among associates.	★ Visitors to your home may be many and frequent. You may entertain them in a group rather than have them drop in casually. You may entertain a V.I.P.	★ You may be introduced to a fascinating member of the opposite sex at a large gathering. His or her importance in social circles may overawe you.	★ Go for your life. Reunions with old friends, meeting new acquaintances, making valuable business-social contacts are all under friendly stars.
TAURUS The Bull APRIL 21 - MAY 20	★ Lucky number this week, 6. Lucky color for love, blue. Lucky gambling colors, grey, green. Lucky days, Tuesday, Sunday. There's luck in new scenes, faces.	★ Of course you'll do as little work as you can. Absentmindedness could result in forgotten items, muddled arrangements and odd mishaps, yet you'll be philosophical.	★ Home could be pushed into the background because new sights and scenes are more appealing. Whether you travel near or far you'll come back refreshed.	★ Travel is the spice of holiday life, but without romance it will not be equal to your dreams. You come into contact with those whose interests differ from your own.	★ Off for a few days, off for a week or two, prospects of becoming a temporary beachcomber or of caravan life hold out promises of a new zest for living, better health.
GEMINI The Twins MAY 21 - JUNE 20	★ Lucky number this week, 5. Lucky color for love, green. Lucky gambling colors, grey, green. Lucky days, Thursday, Saturday. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.	★ Those wishing to indulge in a little mild gamble are likely to find the fifth event or the fifth entry a luck-bringer. Others pocket a bit of extra money.	★ A self-helper and self-starter, you may change the look of the old homestead or make valuable additions to it, partly through your own labor.	★ Go slow with that lightning attraction. There is an element of deception, or the stranger pretends to be what he is not, socially or financially.	★ Most of you will go quiet on the strictly social side. You feel the need for rest and leisure and time to yourself to think things over. You may win a prize.
CANCER The Crab JUNE 21 - JULY 20	★ Lucky number this week, 2. Lucky color for love, white. Lucky gambling colors, black, violet. Lucky days, Wednesday, Thursday. Luck will come through partners.	★ Light work can be made of your job, for there's a team waiting to help you rush through it. If picknicking or weekend-making, hands will help.	★ Seeing more of the family than usual could give you a warm glow. Oath-taking loved ones around you may be your main pleasure during the holidays.	★ If single, an offer of marriage. If still fancy-free, this could be the dawn of a lifelong love. If married and middle-aged, you renew your romance by stepping out.	★ Highly sociable and exceedingly varied, with no two days alike. This runs the gamut from family gatherings to party-going for the young. You may attend a wedding.
LEO The Lion JULY 21 - AUGUST 20	★ Lucky number this week, 6. Lucky color for love, red. Lucky gambling colors, red, yellow. Lucky days, Wednesday, Sunday. Luck helps the self-reliant.	★ Does everybody buzz off and leave you to hold down the fort? Or are you extremely anxious to finish certain enterprises begun? With determination you can.	★ Tending your garden, listening to the radio, or reading a book may suit you better than dashing off to crowded resorts. Sketchy meals after Christmas.	★ Has the thrill gone? Love seems fading out. You've discovered the loved one was not that super-being you imagined. That can happen to anybody.	★ If you're fixing up a weekend place or a shack at the beach or in the hills, friends may turn in and help. Otherwise, work in some scheme dear to all of you.
VIRGO The Virgin AUGUST 21 - SEPTEMBER 20	★ Lucky number this week, 1. Lucky color for love, brown. Gambling colors, brown, green. Lucky days, Monday, Sunday. There's romance in your luck.	★ You're play-minded rather than work-minded, so you'll scurry through in order to enjoy extra leisure. If you can, you'll take time off and relax.	★ If a parent, taking the children to the beach could be a happy way of filling your days. If a teenager, you bring home some of your pals.	★ Love is where you find it. The new boy or girl friend may have been wished on you by chance or circumstance, but there is a magnet which draws you.	★ There's fun at home, fun abroad, and good times everywhere. Invitations rain on you. You cannot accept them all. You'll be a gadabout and love it.
LIBRA The Balance SEPTEMBER 21 - OCTOBER 20	★ Lucky number this week, 6. Lucky color for love, blue. Lucky gambling colors, blue, purple. Lucky days, Tuesday, Saturday. There's treasure in your own home.	★ Since the centre of activities is likely to be at home, your place of residence may be your chief preoccupation. Household equipment may give you a thrill.	★ Those who have recently moved into new quarters are busy from early morning with ideas for improving the place. A few may go prospecting as home-hunters.	★ Is it more fun to sit in the lounge and make love than to gallop off to the pictures? Some of you are on the verge of an important announcement to friends.	★ You may give a party in honor of an old friend leaving the district or a relative going on a long journey. Any organization is liable to hold an annual function.
SCORPIO The Scorpion OCTOBER 21 - NOVEMBER 20	★ Lucky number this week, 5. Lucky color for love, grey. Lucky gambling colors, grey, red. Lucky days, Wednesday, Friday. Your luck is on the open road.	★ Your job is likely to be wrapped up in a number of short journeys involving all sorts of errands, seeing people, and arranging a schedule of things to be done.	★ Outings lure you forth from your home. Restlessness and the desire for change may take you where you have not been before, so don't forget to look up.	★ Just because the best-beloved is away, you need not sit alone and sulk. There are some attractive second-besters in the offing. Spend an evening with one of them.	★ Many brief journeys for the day only could be a feature of your social life. Nearly all of them take you into the outdoors. City people go into the country.
SAGITTARIUS The Archer NOVEMBER 21 - DECEMBER 20	★ Lucky number this week, 3. Lucky color for love, purple. Gambling colors, violet, brown. Lucky days, Thursday, Friday. There's luck in an outside chance.	★ A financial reckoning with yourself may be pleasing or otherwise. Possibly you will make a few resolutions or even decide to go on a budget.	★ Should you be considering buying, renting or leasing a house or flat, discussions on the subject will be important and a decision will be made this week.	★ This romantic stuff is rather expensive, you think. Presents, outings, etc., hit the old pocket-book hard. If the beloved has been a gold-digger call it off.	★ Invariably you have a tendency to "pick up the check." You enjoy acting as host or hostess and being a good fellow, but you may be imposed upon.
CAPRICORN The Goat DECEMBER 21 - JANUARY 19	★ Lucky number this week, 4. Lucky color for love, orange. Gambling colors, orange, black. Lucky days, Monday, Thursday. Your luck lies in your quick wits.	★ Personal affairs, preferences, hopes, and wishes may block out your ordinary tasks. You're coming to a crossroads and you may clear the decks for action.	★ There is something you have wanted for a very long time now at your disposal, or some plan for which you have wished to carry out now about to be launched.	★ This could be tense, the climax of several months of going around together. If you really are meant for each other, this week is likely to settle the question.	★ Most of you should be sitting on top of the world with pleasant prospects wherever you look. Through your personal efforts you can bring together congenial people.
AQUARIUS The Waterbearer JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 19	★ Lucky number this week, 1. Lucky color for love, yellow. Lucky gambling colors, grey, yellow. Lucky days, Wednesday, Saturday. There's luck in a forgotten asset.	★ For many of you this week, the best part of your job is the pay-envelope. You want to relax quietly and be let alone while you meditate on the next move.	★ It isn't easy to put your foot down and make yourself unpopular in the domestic scene, but if you've reached the limit of patience you can get rid of an annoyance.	★ You'd rather worship from a distance. You're scared stiff that disillusionment could hurt you cruelly. No love affair ever stands still. Risk finding out.	★ You think peace and quiet would be wonderful after recent weeks of rushing about. Your own company can be excellent. Devote the next few days to your hobby.
PISCES The Fish FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20	★ Lucky number this week, 7. Lucky color for love, pastel. Gambling colors, colors in threes. Lucky days, Monday, Saturday. There's luck in popularity.	★ Your job may dissolve into all-time around and talking with friends and associates. A group, of which you are a member, may be concerned with a joint project.	★ That backyard barbecue should come in handy right now. You can return hospitality with a minimum of effort. Some of you will decide to entertain members of a club.	★ Quite young subjects find friendship leads by slow degrees to love, only they are disappointed because it isn't startling, dramatic, exciting, as it is on the screen.	★ Members of surf clubs, yachting clubs, etc., have a glorious time. So do all beach-lovers. For the teenager, romance is well in the picture.

blew on his purple fingers. The dear fellow had rushed out of the house without gloves and he had got jolly cold in that aeroplane as you can imagine. But he was game and he was gay. And he trotted off down the road towards the waits, a short, happy man in a bowler hat, full of hope.

Meanwhile, I flew up to that lighted window to have a look. As I imagined, it was Madam's bedroom. She was looking at herself in the looking-glass, repairing the ravages of the journey. No doubt she had been asleep all day, taking the weight off her feet to rest her face.

She was a beautiful woman still, but she did look disagreeable. As I flew in through the window Sally came in through the door, carrying a supper tray with two boiled eggs on it. I whistled and Sally dropped the tray.

"That's a fine Christmas dinner for a growing girl," I said. "Look what you've made me do," screamed Sally.

"What?" Her dress spun round from her dressing-table. "What did you say? How dare you?"

I flew up to the ceiling for refuge. There was a new look in Dame Beatrice's bright brown eyes and I could see that I was no longer invisible to her. She had been listening to the music of the waits and she had been remembering.

She had been a little girl of five again, nibbling the tips of her fingers, looking out at a garden where all the flowers were under snow, listening to the waits. And the garden was a happy place. As it should be at Christmas. Something must have gone most dreadfully wrong somewhere for this Christmas to be so desolate and sad.

Dame Beatrice looked at Sally. Sally, surrounded with broken china and broken eggshells, was having hysterics.

Continuing . . . Sally and the Christmas Angel

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If it wasn't bad enough not to be able to go and see her Mum and Dad and Tony on Christmas Day, if Dame Beatrice hadn't got rid of that American out of sheer jealousy and sent him off to his hotel and how could Sally possibly ring the young man up, why he would think she was chasing him, and, oh dear, she wished she were dead.

At this point she was face downwards on Dame Beatrice's bed and neither she nor I could hear any more. I fluttered down from the ceiling and Dame Beatrice said, "Good heavens" and "My dear child," with a completely new, warm tone in her voice. And at that moment the front door bell started to peal its head off, and I could hear Ben Canterbury's voice upraised in "See Amid the Winter's Snow."

I went out of that room like a bat out of hell for Andrew K. Pulsen, the erring Yank, whose faint heart would never win fair lady.

I found him sitting in his grand hotel, staring out at the solitary frozen wastes of Hyde Park. He had put his glasses on again and he looked extremely silly. I came in his window with scant ceremony. Time was getting short.

"Why," he said, with his broad face lighting up. "My cherub chum."

"You . . ." I said, "are the original dunder-headed idiot. Fancy letting that girl through your fingers like that."

"But it wasn't the girl," said Andrew K. Pulsen. "It was that woman. I never met such a woman in my life. And that house. Ramael. I never saw such a frightening house in all my life."

"Why, the hall alone . . . so echoing and cold. And as for that great staircase and the music-room where I had to put

the mirror and those great pillars. And the drawing-room. Oh, my. All that furniture like ghosts under dustsheets. I thought I'd die of fright. It was like the sleeping palace. In the story."

"Well, didn't you want to rescue Sally from it?"

"Why, sure. Sure I did. But she said she couldn't come out to dinner on account of leaving that old Dame all alone just as I was starting to persuade her."

"You mean you tried to kiss her?"

"Certainly not," Andrew K. Pulsen was outraged. "A nice girl like that. I just had hold of her hand, that's all. When Dame Beatrice walked in. And the way she spoke. Oh, my, she made it all seem . . . Oh, dear." And Andrew K. Pulsen gulped at the recollection.

"Why, you silly fool," I said. "What should I have done?"

said Andrew K. Pulsen, quite humbly.

"Done!" I was furious. "You've done nothing. That's your trouble. You should have gone into their kitchen and cooked them Christmas dinner. And bought them the very best vintage wines. Then the girl would have been thrilled with you. And you should have flirted, carlessly, with Dame Beatrice. Then she would have been thrilled with you, too."

"Oh, dear," said Andrew K. Pulsen. "But I can't cook."

I was nearly beside myself with fuss, wondering what was happening to poor gay Mr. Canterbury in that house. "It's not too late," I cried. "Take your glasses off. How much money have you got? Come with me . . ."

And I hustled him out to

Soho, where (as any cherub knows) one can always get a meal at any hour of any day. I pushed him into an Italian restaurant. I told him what to get and how to pack it in a basket. I told him the wines. I reminded him of Christmas pudding, holly, mistletoe, Christmas-tree, and table napkins. Andrew K. Pulsen had to pay out rather a lot of money, I'm afraid.

"I don't care," he said. "At least it's better than sitting staring out of a hotel window waiting for a girl to call me up. I'm quite glad to be cheated."

Which is hardly my idea of an intelligent way to get along. I must admit. However, we got into another taxi and we rattled and jogged and bounced and creaked all the way to Dame Beatrice's house.

ONE thing was different about it. This time, someone had left open the front door and the light in the hall streamed out, which gave an illusion of welcome. Andrew K. Pulsen stood on the top step, breathing heavily. He was heavy laden.

"Shall I hang the mistletoe on the hall lamp?" he asked. "That's where we always used to hang it back home."

"You keep that mistletoe," I said vulgarly. "You're going to need it."

"Oh . . ." Andrew K. Pulsen dumped some of his burden in the hall. "Where do you suppose they all are?"

He stood, staring up the broad staircase, his hands full of mistletoe, his head bare and his handsome young face lit up by the hall lamp. I was quite proud of him. And then Sally appeared at the top of the staircase. Her tears had dried.

She had brushed her hair. But she looked, for half a second, lonely and afraid. And then she saw Andrew. And her face came alight from inside.

"Oh," she said. "Darling. And she held the stair rail. 'You came back. You came back.'"

Andrew, thank heavens, said nothing. He stood in the light of the lamp. Then Sally ran downstairs. She hardly seemed to touch the last flight. Andrew K. Pulsen opened his arms and she fell into them.

Perhaps she slipped on the bottom step. At all events he caught her and held her and showed her that it was mistletoe he was holding. She seemed very pleased. It was at this moment that Dame Beatrice and Mr. Canterbury came down the staircase together, arm-in-arm.

"I've brought you some dinner," says Andrew K. Pulsen, as bold as brass. "I have it here in the baskets. Will you help me unpack it?" And he didn't let go of Sally for a single instant.

Oh, what an unpacking that was. And how Dame Beatrice raked through her jewel case for strange glittering things to put on the tree. And how Mr. Canterbury came into his own in the kitchen, carrying steaming dishes and bullying the young people, who kept stopping to stare at one another and so got in everybody's way.

And then corks popped and champagne foamed into glasses and Mr. Canterbury carved and speeches were made and healths were drunk. And everybody sat hand-in-hand and laughed a little and cried a little more. And I decorated the top branch of the tree, all among Dame Beatrice's ropes of pearls which she had hung there, among the dark branches. I was very



"Did you know there's a lotta old ladders and boards practically blocking our front porch?"

happy and so was everybody else.

And afterwards, glowing with the wine and the firelight and the fun, Mr. Canterbury took his courage in his hands and said he was going into the music-room to play carols. Dame Beatrice didn't even wince. And they all trooped in together carrying candles and glasses, and the great wide echoing room, with its windows and its priceless concert grand, came suddenly alive.

Mr. Canterbury sat on the music-stool and played. They all sang together. My mission was accomplished. Their family was complete. They remembered to smile at one another, but they forgot about me. I was a little bit hurt. I rose for the last time, to fly round the room, now warm with light and love and then young Sally looked up and saw me. And she raised her glass.

"To the Christmas angel," she said.

I felt so proud and humble. I was so sorry to go. It was wonderful in that room. Do you know, as I was flying back that night the light that shone from that music-room was as bright as the light of heaven?"

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their diminishing coal and oil supplies in the annual hope that they might be stretched out to meet the coming of warm weather, a series of conferences was being held in another part of the country, the results of which were to have a direct impact on many an unsuspecting Rock Harbor citizen.

Hundreds of miles away, in the region referred to as "the Middle West" by those living east of the Alleghenies and "the East" by those living west of the Mississippi, a family, by the name of Hobbs, wrestled grimly with the well-nigh unsolvable problem of selecting a place in which to spend Mr. Hobbs' vacation that would be satisfactory to all the members of his family—and reasonably acceptable to him.

As a matter of fact Mr. Hobbs was the only one who did not take an active part in these debates. He knew from experience that the dice were loaded against him, and in such situations he had learned that the most dignified thing to do was to sit apart and look slightly amused—an attitude that had the additional advantage of being almost unbearably irritating.

Left to his own devices, Mr. Hobbs might have chosen places that would have surprised even those who knew him best. Like many successful and outwardly hardheaded businessmen, he was a romanticist at heart. But this was a weakness he concealed as a bride conceals a false tooth.

Had the question been put to him, he would have voted for vague, faraway places—places where the natives wore strange and colorful costumes, if any, and unscalable, snow-clad peaks cast purple shadows over jungles and sand-swept deserts.

Actually he was not very clear about where those places were, but it did not matter, for no one would have taken him seriously if he had been able to put his finger on them in the dark.

Mrs. Hobbs' idea of earthly bliss, on the other hand, was to reassemble her rapidly expanding, and more rapidly disintegrating, family. She declared that she was willing to go anywhere at all so long as her beloved children were around her.

Actually she was a bit less than honest in this statement, for Mrs. Hobbs was what might be called grandchild-happy, and much as she loved her children she would have sacrificed them all with a whoop and committed mayhem to boot in order to get her hands on her three grandchildren for one precious month. Also "anywhere at all" was to Mrs. Hobbs a much more definite place than the phrase implied.

She had already visualised a big, rambling summer cottage somewhere on the New England coast, a place where the swimming was good (which to Mrs. Hobbs meant lying on the sand for hours in and out of the shade of a beach umbrella), a place where there would be young people for Kate, a place where the grandchildren could roll around under Mrs. Hobbs' ever watchful and delighted eyes.

As for the three Hobbs girls, they had all reached the age when they definitely resented being forced to make plans. On the other hand they had not yet outgrown the belief that it was their prerogative to find the home nest ready and waiting, with the beds turned down, whenever the wings of freedom grew weary.

To all Mrs. Hobbs' pleas for some indication of what their plans for the coming summer might be, their answer was that it would be quite impossible for them to make up their minds so far ahead of time. Mr. and Mrs. Hobbs should not really count on them at all. That

Continuing One Big Happy Family

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would be the safest thing. Then, if none of the nebulous and half-baked summer projects, which they now had in mind, should materialise, they would turn up at the last minute.

Kate, who, until recently, would have gone without question wherever her family chose to take her, was showing the influence of two years at Smith. She was going abroad, she said. It was not so much that she yearned for the cultural advantages of Europe. But three of her closest friends were going, and for Kate every other spot on the globe had thereby become a dump.

Mr. Hobbs said he didn't want to restrict Kate's horizons, but he just didn't have what it took to maintain a city home, a country home, and send his daughter gallivanting all over the world. That sort of thing, he declared, was for racketeers who didn't pay their income taxes.

Kate said she didn't think a simple little trip to Europe was "gallivanting all over the world," and besides she was too old to be treated like a horse and vanned around by her parents from one premarital show to another. As for the cost, she would pay every cent, and she meant every cent, out of her own money.

All she asked was that Mr. Hobbs lend it to her to begin with and then take it out of her allowance beginning after she had paid some of her current bills.

Mrs. Hobbs' two married daughters were even more difficult, and in view of the fact that the possession of the grandchildren hinged on them, they were vital to her plans.

Both, unfortunately, lived out of town. For two months Mrs. Hobbs had been phoning and writing and pleading in a vain attempt to pin them down.

"Mother, we just can't tell," Jane Grant was standing in the midst of the chaos that was her living-room. "Byron just never knows whether he's going to take a vacation or not. He may teach in summer school. He may work on his book. He may want to spend it with his mother. We may be in Alaska—"

"Alaska!" exclaimed Mrs. Hobbs with alarm.

"Well, you know, Mother—anywhere. You can't tell where we might go. Why don't you and Dad just plan without us? You both ought to get off somewhere by yourselves and forget your family for a while."

Mrs. Hobbs knew that they would come at the last minute, but this sort of talk always made her panicky.

"You know perfectly well, Jane, that your father wouldn't hear of such a thing. He just lives for those grandchildren. No, it simply means that we'll have to find some place big enough to take you all and then hope that someday you'll be able to make up your minds about something."

Susan wrote, "Mother, we just can't plan so far ahead. We may be with you, but you mustn't be disappointed if we only turn up for a day or two, or not at all. Stew hates to be pinned down. It makes him awfully nervous. You know how temperamental and sensitive he is. He's the kind that likes to wake up in the morning and say, 'Let's go, and then go.'"

Mrs. Hobbs sighed. "I had lunch today with Retta Nickerson," said Mrs. Hobbs.

"Nothing unusual about that," said Mr. Hobbs. "If you didn't have lunch with Retta Nickerson, that might be news. Like that whaler's log at the New Bedford museum. It mentions the captain's drinking habits only once during a two-year cruise. Then it says, 'The captain was not drunk today.'"

"in," said Mrs. Hobbs. "There's no point to it anyway, because Retta and I never take a cocktail in the middle of the day. Now I can't remember what I started to tell you. I wish you wouldn't do that."

"You had lunch with Retta Nickerson," said Mr. Hobbs patiently.

"Oh, yes. Well, you know the Nickersons always go to Rock Harbor for Jack's vacation."

Mr. Hobbs nodded vacantly. He was thinking of a man he had to see the next morning.

"Well, they're not going this year, but Retta says she knows a house that would be just right for us. It's big enough for the whole family, and it's got a little beach of its own where the children could play."

"Rock Harbor's too rich for my blood," said Mr. Hobbs. "Besides I wouldn't want to go to that kind of place anyway. Too much dressing-up, and lade-da, and all that sort of thing."

"Well, darling, that's exactly why Retta thought this house was made to order for us. It's not expensive, because, from what Retta said, I guess it's not one of the newest houses. And then she said it was about eight miles outside Rock Harbor so that you could mix into things or not, just as you felt like. So you see it would be fun for Kate, and heavenly for

There, to the right, was the pirates' cove. He could see a path descending to it through the bayberry bushes. Halfway down the slope was a little shack. That must be the pump house.

He found a towel and went downstairs to reread the directions for starting the pump.

The living-room looked even uglier by daylight than it had the night before, but somehow less depressing. Once off by himself the sense of high adventure began to return. He slipped the directions into the pocket of his dressing-gown and started for the pump house, humming a little tune.

"Tiny little thing," he murmured as he opened the door of the pump house. Such a nidget of an engine ought to be easy. Carefully, step by step, he followed the instructions. It took time, but he thought he had them right. It gave him a feeling of self-confidence. Now a smart push down on the foot pedal and off we go.

He put his foot on the starter and jabbed it down with all his might. It smacked against the concrete floor with an ankle-jarring crash. The fly-wheel turned over stiffly. There was a sucking noise. Then all was still. But then the directions had given a hint that the thing might not start at the first kick-over. On a crisp morning like this it might take two or three goes.

Half an hour later Mr. Hobbs had shed his bathrobe



the grandchildren, and just what you want."

"In what way?" asked Mr. Hobbs. But he knew the matter had been decided.

"It's called Grey Gables," said Mrs. Hobbs.

The sun climbed out of the ocean and eventually worked itself up to the level of Mr. Hobbs' window sill. As his brassy rays shone on his face he opened his eyes, then closed them again quickly and pulled his head under the covers. He needed this seclusion to gather his wits, for he did not have the foggiest idea where he was or how he came to be in a hammock. Gradually he realised that it was not a hammock but a bed, a white iron bed with tired springs.

Raising himself cautiously, he looked out over a deep-blue sea sparkling in the golden morning light. From somewhere offshore came the muffled put-put of a lobsterman's dory. He suddenly felt a great urge to be outside, to be a part of this dazzling scene. Above all things he did not want to wake anyone. This particular moment belonged to him. Hobbs walks alone! The dawn patrol!

He looked at his wrist watch. It was eight o'clock. Well, anyway, he wanted to do it alone.

"Rog, won't you please get after that pump?" Mrs. Hobbs was regarding him sleepily from the adjoining bed.

The sun lost its sparkle. The room became an ugly, match-boarded enclosure. He had forgotten all about the pump. He found a pair of slippers and a dressing-gown in one of the suitcases, put them on, and went to the window.

"Yes," he said. "Do you think there's something the matter with it, dear?" "Yes," he said, and walked silently down the path towards the cove. Mrs. Hobbs watched him anxiously. It seemed to her that he tottered just a wee bit.

"I do wish you'd get it started, dear," she called after him. "I have just enough water left for the coffee."

Mr. Mauricio of the Rock Harbor Utilities and Real Estate Company did not seem in the least surprised to see Mr. Hobbs enter his office.

"Something wrong out at Grey Gables?" he inquired cheerfully.

Mr. Hobbs assured him that he was correct. Something was wrong, very wrong. There was not a drop of water in the blasted house because the blasted pump was no good. Busted. Kaput. He had a houseful of people, and he was

Mr. Mauricio listened attentively, nodding his head from time to time.

"That's a good pump," he said finally. "Best kind of pump."

Mr. Hobbs gripped the edge of Mr. Mauricio's desk. "I'm telling you," he said with restrained dignity, "that no matter how good it is it doesn't work."

"Won't start, you mean?" suggested Mr. Mauricio.

"One hundred per cent. correct," said Mr. Hobbs.

Mr. Mauricio studied a large discolored real-estate map of Rock Harbor which almost covered the opposite wall.

"Guess you'll have to get Fred Saltonstall to look it over. Sounds as if it may need a bit of adjusting."

"Who's Fred Saltonstall?"

"Plumber. Fine fellow. Takes care of all the summer people. You ought to get to know him right away."

"Where do I get hold of him?"

Mr. Mauricio did some thoughtful doodling on a pad of paper.

"That's hard to tell," he said finally. "He might be home—and then he might not. He might be out on a job—and again he might be doing something else."

"What do you think? I've got to do something."

"Well, you might take a chance and call his home, but then if he's not there you've wasted a call. Wife's there, perhaps. She's apt to know where he's gone. He's at six-two-W-three. I got to go out. You sit here and call him. May take you a little while. Party line."

That was an understatement. But eventually Mr. Hobbs got through to Mrs. Saltonstall. No, Mr. Saltonstall was not in. No, she didn't know when he'd be back. Probably late that night. No, she didn't know just where he was. He was apt to be anywhere in the course of a day, the way things went wrong with the summer people.

He'd said something about stopping at Davises'. Did Mr. Hobbs know where Davises' was? Well, he couldn't miss it if he took the Oldfetter Road and watched out for a red panel truck.

An hour later Mr. Hobbs found Davises'. Mr. Saltonstall had been there, but he'd left some time ago. On his way to the Watsons'. Couldn't miss it. Big white house back from the road. Watch for a red panel truck.

All the houses in that particular section were white and back from the road. Finally he spied a red panel truck coming out of a driveway about half a mile ahead. It started down the road like a racing car. Mr. Hobbs in hot pursuit.

It was a long chase, but at last the red truck drew into a gas station, and Mr. Hobbs cornered it.

It was difficult to tell what Mr. Saltonstall looked like, his

face being almost hidden by daubs of black grease. He was most friendly. He got out of the panel truck and seized Mr. Hobbs' hand in a greasy clasp. They sat down together on the running-board of the truck.

Mr. Saltonstall produced cigarette papers and a bag of tobacco, from which he fashioned a cigarette with great deliberation. When it was finished, it was almost as greasy as the rest of him.

Mr. Hobbs explained his difficulties. Mr. Saltonstall was sympathetic.

"My, my," he said. "You shouldn't have no trouble. Good pump. Put it in myself. I'll run down bimby."

"Couldn't you come now?" pleaded Mr. Hobbs.

Mr. Saltonstall consulted a greasy gold watch. "I promised Mrs. Cotes I'd be right up to look at her cesspool. Backing up or something. Sure. I'll run over to your place now. Mrs. Cotes can wait."

"You lead the way," said Mr. Hobbs. "I haven't any idea how to get there."

Fifteen minutes later the red panel truck tore into the driveway of Grey Gables, throwing up a shower of gravel. Mr. Hobbs was close behind. Mrs. Hobbs heard the cars and came out on to the porch.

"Roger Hobbs, where have you been? Really, you are very aggravating sometimes. You go off somewhere and get talking—"

Mr. Hobbs interrupted. "If I let him out of my sight, somebody'll steal him."

Mr. Saltonstall had selected a boxful of tools from the truck and was on his way down to the pump house. He looked at the little engine for a long time.

"You say she don't start?"

He asked finally. He obviously didn't want to attack the problem from the wrong angle, owing to a misunderstanding.

"It won't start," said Mr. Hobbs.

Mr. Saltonstall hitched up his blue jeans. He leaned down and poked at the engine with a blackened forefinger, while Mr. Hobbs watched anxiously over his shoulder. Then he backed away and pushed the starting lever down with his foot.

The engine coughed once or twice, then settled into a contented purr.

"Okay now," said Mr. Saltonstall. "Good engine." He picked up his box of tools. "Got to go now. See Mrs. Cotes. Something the matter with her cesspool. Backing up most likely. Pleased to have metcha."

As has been mentioned previously, Mr. Hobbs was a romanticist at heart, although he would never have admitted it. As an executive it was his responsibility to make stockholders' dreams come true, but such luxuries had no place in his own busy schedule.

All through the winter months, his feet seldom wandered from the path of duty. No beaver could have led a more dedicated life. With the first touch of spring, however, something within him changed. His imagination, which had given him no trouble for months, suddenly seemed to escape from its industrial cage and to start soaring back and forth over the magic month of August.

August! It seemed like such a long and ample period when considered from the vantage ground of early spring. The whole of August! In such a space of time it should be possible to do so many pleasant things.

By the time July came around ideas were crowding in on him so fast that he began to feel pressed. It was evident that only by exercising Spartan discipline could he hope to accomplish all he had in mind.

It would be good for him though, part of the whole, clean picture. He would get

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DRESS SENSE *By Betty Keep*

A voluminous, hooded beach-coat makes fresh summer fashion news this year.

THE fashion flash above answers the reader's letter below.

Here is her letter and my reply.

"I AM wondering if you can assist me with a design and pattern for a beach-coat. I don't like the very brief jackets, yet I want something smart and new-looking. I would also like a suggestion for the material."

A hooded beach-wrap designed on generous lines in towelling would look smart and new for the beach. Furthermore, it would be extremely practical. A design in this category is illustrated at right. In the illustration the coat is worn hanging loose and straight, but it would look equally smart belted at the natural waistline.

A paper pattern for the design is obtainable in sizes 32 to 38in. bust; I hope this takes in your size. You forgot to mention the latter when writing. See lines under sketch for further details and how to order.

"I WANT to make a really pretty summer dress, but because of black freckles I can't have it with a low neck. Would you please help me with this problem? I have a sallow complexion and take SSW fitting."

Have a long-torso dress with wide ribbon laced through a straight, high neckline and tied at the back in a bow with streamer ends. Have the dress made in printed cotton. Try to find a cotton featuring dark and light pink on a white ground, and have black velvet for the ribbon trimming.

"AS I live in a country town I don't get much chance to see really smart beach wear first-hand. I would be very pleased if you could let me know what you think is the newest swimming costume."

The newest swimsuits are



D.S.170.—Hooded beach-wrap in sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Requires 5½yds. 36in. material. Price 3/9. Patterns may be ordered from Betty Keep, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

one-piece, designed with a long-torso top finished with bloomer legs, or with a little flared skirt.

"IN the evenings I often dress in a separate bare top and a wide skirt. I am very fond of this way of dressing, but would like something a bit different."

Slender-line skirts, straight tunics, and over-blouses offer a change to a bare top and

buffant skirt. Alternatively, a brief and bare sheath dress could be the pivot for a separate-unit plan and could be varied with jacket, over-skirt, and tunic.

"WOULD you suggest a girlish trimming in white for a dark navy frock with a high neckline?"

I suggest you finish the dress with a lace-edged, white pique collar and matching cuffs.

up early—seven o'clock—half-past six—why not six? Early bed and early up. The golden days of August were precious and not to be wasted.

Now that August had arrived, however, he was aware that the concept had, somehow or other, gone askew. In the first place he wasn't getting up as early as planned. He didn't want to set the alarm clock and disturb Peggy, but without it he slept like a lump through the beautiful dawn hours to which he had looked forward. In fact, by the time he awoke, Mrs. Hobbs had usually been off about her business for an hour.

Then, of course, he had not figured on the water pump. He knew now that he would never master the thing. All he could hope for was to learn the techniques involved in waging a running fight with it. There were mornings when he won. At other times the pump came out ahead. But regardless of the outcome it was something impossible to reckon with in laying out a schedule.

After breakfast came the chores. It had never occurred to him there could be so many routine tasks connected with a house run as simply as Grey Gables.

First he must dump the garbage. Although he did not admit it, this was perhaps his favorite chore, for the garbage pit could be a pleasant place on a sparkling, sunny morning.

Then there were the bottles. Mr. Hobbs had never realised how many empty bottles a family can produce each day. Their disposal presented a problem until he discovered a clump of bushes, halfway down the path to the cove, from the centre of which emerged a steeply-shaped rock. It was a wonderful target for empty bottles, and whether he hit it or not didn't really matter, since everything disappeared eventually into the bushes.

He occasionally varied his routine by throwing an empty bottle into the air and trying to hit it with a second one before both disappeared into the matted undergrowth. He had to be careful, of course, that someone coming down the path to the cove did not interrupt one of these exhibitions, but this slight element of danger only made the game more interesting.

These were his routine duties. They were neither arduous nor complex, but it was amazing how much time he could spend on them. After some experience a good planner of days should have been able to take such things into account and adjust his schedule accordingly. It was the casual odds and ends, however, the unforeseeable flotsam and jetsam of daily living, that really derailed his plans.

"I've got to go down to the village, dear. It would help a lot if you'd come with me. I have to drop the laundry at Mrs. Maroni's and I can't struggle with that basket."

"Where in the world is Kate?" asked Mr. Hobbs crossly. "Doesn't that child have any part in this performance at all?"

"Roger, I don't think you'd notice if your family disappeared into thin air. Kate spent the night with the Sandhursts after the dance. And, anyway, this is the child's vacation."

Mr. Hobbs looked at Mrs. Hobbs curiously, but said nothing.

These trips to Rock Harbor were a constant source of bewilderment and financial anguish to him.

"Why in the world you can't clean this whole mess up once a week, Peggy, and then forget it for the other six days is more than I can understand."

It sounded easy, but each day seemed to bring some sort

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of crisis that inevitably involved a trip to the village. And, regardless of what trifling item had made the journey necessary, the car always returned to Grey Gables with the usual number of big cartons lined up on the back seat, each bulging with miscellaneous household musts, of which toilet paper always seemed to have been the last article packed.

They never varied in size or weight, and Mr. Hobbs eventually became convinced that if Mrs. Hobbs ran a continuous shuttle service to Rock Harbor this would still be true.

As he staggered between the car and the kitchen with these ungainly burdens he never ceased to wonder where all this merchandise was going. It was like pouring water into a sieve, only more expensive. Each day he carried great piles of food and equipment to the kitchen table. Each day he delivered a small pail of garbage to the crows, burned a few papers, and hurled a few empties into the bushes.

A large ruled pad lay on the living-room table. On this Mrs. Hobbs kept a running list of needed things. Hour by hour during the day it grew in length. "Put down catchup, will you, dear, while you're sitting there."

"I'm not 'sitting there.' I'm reading," said Mr. Hobbs, "and what's more I saw about three bottles of catchup coming in yesterday. Good heavens, Peggy, what do you do with the stuff—flush the drains with it?"

"Darling, it doesn't make any difference when we bought catchup. The point is it's all gone now. And we don't pour it down the drains. Just write down two bottles of catchup, and stop fussing about things that are not in your department."

Mr. Hobbs muttered something about his department having to go on three shifts to pay for the wastage of other departments—and made the notation.

Mrs. Hobbs was standing by the kitchen sink. "Roger, while you're doing nothing, will you put down a bread knife and a pencil sharpener. Oh, yes, and a paper-towel holder."

"Isn't this house equipped with anything? What do you mean, a 'paper-towel holder'?"

"One of these metal things to hold rolls of paper towels. Like this."

"What's the matter with that one?"

"Every time you try to tear off a paper towel, the roll falls into the sink. Look." Mrs. Hobbs pulled at a paper towel, and, as predicted, the roll disengaged itself and fell into the dishpan with a splash. "See?"

Mr. Hobbs made the requested memoranda. "If you knew it was going to fall into the water, that was a silly thing to do," he said.

Having failed to reduce the number of these expeditions to the village, Mr. Hobbs tried to introduce some efficiency into them, hoping in this way to salvage a few of the hours when he should have been lying on sun-baked sands or walking over lonely moors.

On the way into town he made a list of all the items Mrs. Hobbs considered him mentally capable of buying. Then he rushed through his purchases, beginning at one end of the business section and ending at the other, exhausted but with a sense of accomplishment.

Having piled his packages in the back of the car, he would go in search of Mrs. Hobbs, whom he usually found either at the A & P or Frisbee's Market, standing before a great heap of merchandise, which perspiring young men in

soiled white aprons were enlarging every minute.

"Almost through, dear?"

"Gracious, no. I've got a million more things. Why don't you go and sit in the car and read? You'll make me nervous if you stand there fidgeting."

"But do you know what time it is?"

"I can't help it, Roger. If you want to eat, someone has to buy the food. Oh, yes, that reminds me—I'm going to need more money. Why don't you give me your wallet, and then all I have to do is tell you how much I've spent?"

It was disconcerting, but Mr. Hobbs hoped that when Mrs. Hobbs finally got the place stocked up and running, his days would become more orderly. Then he might find time for some of his more important projects.

For the moment, however, things were not working out quite as he had planned.

Mr. Hobbs looked forward to the arrival of his two married daughters and their families. Then everything would fall into the groove. As he thought of the happy hours he would spend with his grandchildren, a warm glow of anticipation permeated his being.

One morning Mr. Hobbs went upstairs to wash his hands. He had been collecting some large rocks down at the cove. These he had placed in a neat row around the edges of the driveway in a final attempt to keep the milkman off the crab grass.

Later he would whitewash them, but staggering up the steep path under their dead weight had been heavy work. He felt tired and drowsy. After he had cleaned up a bit it might be pleasant to stretch out on his bed for a few minutes.

He placed the rubber stopper in the bowl, washed his hands with sleepy care, and removed the stopper. To his surprise the water did not revolve clockwise down the drain in the mysterious manner of well-regulated water. Instead a column of brown liquid shot up from the bottom of the bowl to the level of Mr. Hobbs' astonished nose.

He jumped back in alarm, never having seen anything quite like this outside of Yellowstone National Park. The geysers subsided, and from the drainpipe came a series of throaty noises from somewhere far below. They were the sort of noises that might have been made by a dying sea serpent.

"But, Roger, I don't see how water could jump at you out of a drainpipe," Mrs. Hobbs declared, in frank incredulity. "It does seem to me this house acts very peculiarly. Have you called Mr. Cabot, or whatever the plumber's name is?"

Mrs. Saltonstall did not know where her husband was. He had been out on jobs since early morning. Yes, if he called in she would tell him. It sounded to her like maybe a cesspool backing up.

This was the first time Mr. Hobbs had given any thought to what happened to the immense quantities of water that flowed from his home each day. His concern to date had been to get the water into it. In the primitive world in which he now lived, however, water appeared to be a two-way problem.

Judging from what he knew about Fred Saltonstall, the man might not show up for days. In the meantime no one knew what hideous things might be concocting in the bowels of the earth beneath him. He decided to do some preliminary research, although he realised that this was not without

Beauty in STEPS IN FOOT COMFORT

Brief:

By CAROLYN EARLE

● Christmas shoppers may doubt the truth of this, but standing all day is much harder on the feet and legs than walking.

IT'S a simple matter of circulation. The flow of circulation to the feet and legs slows up with constant standing. This does not happen when you keep walking.

But at some time or another everyone who spends a lot of time afoot feels the need of rest and comfort.

Relaxing, or even sleeping, with the feet propped on a couple of pillows is good for tired feet.

Another overall rest position for bare feet is to sit with shoulders and back relaxed, with the knees apart and ankles crossed in such a way that the feet rest on the outer sides.

And don't forget that hot and cold foot baths stir up the circulation and reduce the swelling in tired, aching feet. Easy-to-do exercises aimed at the ankles, arches, and toes are particularly helpful for anyone who has to stand all day.

The sort that require you to grip with the toes are specially recommended for arch and toe limbering. Curl the toes under to pick up some small object like a marble or a pencil, or try curling up the edges of a thick towel.

Circling the ankles, first in one direction, then in the other, and making as large a circle as possible each time round, is a good way to ease tiredness.

danger to himself in case of a major eruption.

Grey Gables had no cellar. It sat close to the ground on a foundation of concrete blocks. Mr. Hobbs had noticed a small wooden panel set into the foundation wall near the kitchen door. He approached this now with unwilling feet, removed the boards, and, lying on his stomach, waved a flashlight back and forth into the darkness.

The narrow beam of the light picked up a broken express wagon, some firewood, numerous wooden piles on which the house appeared to be resting, and an occasional section of iron pipe. Mr. Hobbs wriggled through the hole like a stout snake and disappeared into a strange, uncharted world.

At just about the time Mr. Hobbs had gone upstairs to wash his hands, Mrs. Archer Gabrielson had stepped daintily across the ancient millstone that formed the doorstep of her historic colonial house, which, for almost two hundred years, had looked out over the peaceful waters of Rock Harbor.

Her smartly slipped feet crunched along the flower-bordered path, passed through the gate of a snow-white picket fence, entered a dark green convertible, and took their places on the foot pedals.

Everything about Mrs. Archer Gabrielson was smart: her clothes, her hair, her car, and the very way she drove it. As she guided it nonchalantly down the narrow, one-way village street, miraculously missing children on bicycles and long lines of parked fenders, her smartness was acknowledged by a kind of running ovation from her fellow townsmen.

To the greetings of the summer colony, she waved and smiled in one way. To the more restrained greetings of the tradesmen, she waved and smiled in a slightly different way.

A stranger, watching her progress, would have concluded that Mrs. Archer Gabrielson not only knew everybody in Rock Harbor, but also in some subtle manner was the pivot around which that compact little community revolved. He would have been correct.

At the end of the street she brought the car to a halt beside Mr. Kenneth Wainwright, disregarding the fact that by so doing she had immobilised traffic for four blocks behind her. Mr. Kenneth Wainwright was Mrs. Gabrielson's fill-in man and one of the few summer residents of Rock Harbor who, at the age of 55, could cross his knees like Clifton Webb.

As he leaned on the door of the convertible it was clear that he had been born to scenes like this. Everything about him fell naturally into place, from his white cable-stitch sweater to his immaculate white shorts and snug-fitting Bermuda stockings.

"Yes, it's really quite ghastly," Mrs. Gabrielson was saying, "but Retta took all the trouble to write me about these people, so I suppose it's up to me to do something about it."

"Would you like a body-guard?" asked Mr. Wainwright.

Mrs. Gabrielson laughed, a light, tinkling laugh that harmonised perfectly with her costume and the convertible.

"No," she said. "I must face my ordeal alone. I went to school with this Mrs. Whatsername, although I can't remember what she looked like." The blowing of horns behind her had grown threatening. "I seem to be holding somebody up," she said. "See you at the Marston's."

She moved forward, and the traffic of Main Street resumed its flow. Once clear of the village she turned west along the shore road in the direction of Grey Gables, looking a bit

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One Big Happy Family

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bored as she always did when following the path of duty, uncertain just exactly where it was leading.

As she had told Kenneth Wainwright, Peggy Richards had gone to Sweetthorn Hall with her. Peggy had been a year ahead of her. They had never met since, and many things could have happened in the intervening years and probably had. She vaguely remembered that Peggy had married some butter-and-egg man from Cleveland. That was all she knew.

At any rate, here they were, and it was up to her to do something about it, because she was Mrs. Archer Gabrielson. Peggy Richards had suddenly become an occupational hazard.

Mrs. Hobbs poked her head into the opening through which her husband had disappeared. She was on her hands and knees, her sleeves were rolled up, wisps of hair hung across her eyes, and there was consternation in her voice.

"Roger. For pity's sake stop fooling around in that place and attend to things. There's a convertible coming up the drive with the top down." In the kitchen above a buzzer sounded.

The voice from underneath the house was muffled. "Listen, Peggy, what am I supposed to be—butler and plumber and everything else in this place? What's the matter? Have you got convertible phobia or what?"

"Oh, dear, this is dreadful." The shadow of Mrs. Hobbs' body disappeared from the opening. Mr. Hobbs wriggled into a new position and continued his inspection.

"I never was more glad to see anyone, Polly, but I couldn't be more embarrassed to have you catch me like this."

"You poor dear," said Mrs. Archer Gabrielson, taking in every detail of Mrs. Hobbs' appearance. "What a heavenly view you have here."

Mrs. Archer Gabrielson seated herself daintily in one of the wicker porch chairs. Mrs. Hobbs felt like a child who has been delegated to make a guest comfortable in her parents' absence.

"It's been so long," Mrs. Archer Gabrielson was saying, "so unbelievably long since those lovely days at Sweetthorn. We were so silly, weren't we? I used to be so scared to death of you because you were one of the old girls."

Mrs. Hobbs bridled slightly. "I was only a year ahead of you," she said.

"Oh, my dear, it must have been more than that. You were ages ahead of me. I was terrified of you, and then you were married, weren't you, and went to live out west somewhere—"

"Cleveland," said Mrs. Hobbs.

"Cleveland," agreed Mrs. Gabrielson. "And we lost all touch with one another, and now it's going to be such fun to have you here, only I wish you were not so far away from things, and I'm dying to meet your nice husband."

Mrs. Hobbs started. From where she was seated she could see the west window of the living-room. A curtain had been lifted cautiously, and in the narrow opening a face had appeared—or rather a mask of red earth, pierced by two glaring eyes. As the eyes met hers the face vanished and the curtain fell back into place.

"I must go and find him," said Mrs. Hobbs. "He's puttering around somewhere. And you will have a cup of tea, won't you?"

Mrs. Archer Gabrielson lifted a white-gloved hand. "Not a thing, my dear. But I do want to meet that man of yours. It seems so funny to think of you

married. I won't believe it till I see him."

On the present showing, Mrs. Hobbs thought grimly, the miracle would be if her visitor believed it when she did see him!

"You have a boat, of course," said Mrs. Gabrielson. There was no shred of doubt in her voice.

There was a streak of dirt still visible in Mr. Hobbs' hair and a large brown patch of the stuff behind his ear that looked like a birthmark. By and large, however, he had done a creditable job under pressure.

Now he began to feel more relaxed, even to the point of being aware of Mrs. Archer Gabrielson's sophisticated charm. To Mrs. Hobbs' surprise he said he'd been thinking about a boat. He just hadn't done anything about it.

"But, my dear, it's a must in Rock Harbor. Everybody has a boat. That nice daughter of yours I want so much to meet is going to use it every day. Do you sail a great deal?"

Mr. Hobbs replied modestly that he'd done quite a bit of crewing in his day.

"Roger has been in the Bermuda race," said Mrs. Hobbs.

"Oh, then you're a real deep-water sailor," said Mrs. Gabrielson.

"These little-class boats of ours will probably bore the life out of you. They're just racing toys. Why don't you get a little boat of some kind for the children to race in and then charter something bigger for yourself?"

Mr. Hobbs said there was so much to do in Rock Harbor

"How much—" he began.

"Oh, gracious, I don't know how much," said Mrs. Gabrielson. Her voice indicated that such matters were not discussed by certain people. "You can arrange all that with Reg. Then, of course, you'll want to join our little yacht club. It's very simple and quite charming. That won't be any trouble, because Reg is Commodore, and naturally if you charter his boat he'll be glad to put you up. And then you'll want to rent—"

Mr. Hobbs never learned what the third thing was, for at that moment a red panel truck skidded into the driveway and made a polo-pony stop before the house. Mr. Saltonstall got out and came over to the porch.

"Well, well," he said. "My missus tells me the cesspool's blown up in your face. Howdo, Mrs. Gabrielson. That water closet of yours stopped dripping yet? I tied a piece of copper wire around the ball cock. I guess it oughta hold till the new part comes. If it don't you can take the tank cover off and take up on it with a pair of pliers. So you think they's something th' matter with th' cesspool, eh? Shouldn't be. Built it myself. Well, I'll stroll around an' have a look at it. You might want to come with me, Mr. Hobbs."

"If you'll excuse me, I think I will," said Mr. Hobbs.

"Might be as the dang thing's filled up," said Mr. Saltonstall. "You get a lot of people in a house like this an' it don't take long."

When Mr. Hobbs returned, the convertible had gone.



he didn't think he'd have time for more than one boat.

"Then I have just the thing for you," said Mrs. Gabrielson. "A Spatterbox."

"A what?" asked Mr. Hobbs.

"A Spatterbox. That's what they call our little racing class here. They're very simple. We try to keep everything very simple. But they're nice little boats. There must be twenty of them. They race every Wednesday and Saturday. You'll have lots of fun racing with your children if they'll let you. Mine won't. Reg McHugh's got a Spatterbox, and there's nobody at his house to sail it during August, so he wants to charter it. I'm seeing him at a cocktail party this afternoon, and I'll manage everything."

"I'd certainly like to look it over," said Mr. Hobbs cautiously.

"Nothing to look at," said Mrs. Gabrielson. "They're all alike. Just take it. You're lucky to get one. I'll take it for you when I see Reg. It's so beautiful here. So primitively wild."

From below the edge of the cliff three crows rose heavily, silhouetted against the blue background of the sea. Their talons were fastened on gleaming objects that Mr. Hobbs knew had just been excavated from his garbage pit. He wished that one of them would jet-tison its freight in Mrs. Gabrielson's immaculate convertible.

Rock Harbor one really should be a part of it.

The yacht club was disappointing to him, although he had no preconceived ideas about such places. It occupied a weather-beaten building that had, apparently, once been a sail loft and that contained a single bare room. A battered upright piano and the garish shields of a jazz orchestra standing on a low platform in one corner, plus a few folding chairs, were its only furnishings.

"What a charming room," said Mrs. Hobbs.

A pier ran from the clubhouse out into the harbor, terminating in a float. The pier served as a hitching rail for a long row of assorted dinghies. A few yards out in the harbor, bobbing violently at their moorings, were the sailboats, including Mr. Hobbs' Spatterbox, which carried the name Dashaway on its stern.

With Mrs. Hobbs and Kate, Mr. Hobbs leaned on the rail at the end of the pier and surveyed his property gloomily. Unfortunately at that miserable cocktail party Mr. McHugh (or McAdoo) had asked him if he was a sailorman. He had indicated, with becoming modesty, that he knew a bit about such matters, which had eventually led him to give McHugh-McAdoo and a group of others a blow-by-blow account of his Bermuda race.

It had been a fatal mistake. When they were leaving, Mr. Hobbs had suggested that McHugh-McAdoo take him for a trial run the next morning in Dashaway for the purpose of showing him the ropes. Like so many sailormen, however, McHugh-McAdoo was one of those objectionably rough-and-ready types who are always simplifying life—for themselves at least.

"Nonsense," he had roared. "You're an old Bermuda man. You don't need me. Dashaway's a child's boat, a toy. Just take her out and get the feel of her. You've been used to get quite a kick out of something that responds like Dashaway. Good little boat. You may find she has too much weather helm, but you'll get used to that in no time."

Mr. Hobbs had said he was sure he would, and the strange thing was that at the moment, and without having the dimmest idea what weather helm meant, he had believed it. Now as he watched Dashaway's mast swinging crazily among a grove of other thrashing spars, he began to have doubts of his sanity.

Kate was tugging at his shirt. "Come on, Pops. Don't let's stand here all day. Let's go."

"Yes, Rog. Let's go for a ride in it. We've got to learn about it sometime."

"First of all you don't 'go for a ride' in a boat," said Mr. Hobbs. "You go for a sail. And secondly you don't take a little racing shell like that out in a gale like this."

They looked disappointed. At that moment two little girls with pigtailed, accompanied by a fat boy, came noisily down the pier. While the Hobbs watched, they threw a sailbag into it casually from the runway of the pier, cast off, and rowed out to one of the boats.

In a few minutes their sail was flapping and slatting. The fat boy let go the mooring, and the little craft, heeling far over, slipped through the fleet into the open harbor, followed by a hopeful gull.

"Well," said Mr. Hobbs uneasily. "I guess we'd better be going back."

"Listen, Pops. Those little girls couldn't have been more than twelve years old. If they can go out, we can."

"Come on, dear. Let's go out. We can help you."

"You're not scared are you, Pops?"

They went back to the club-

house and got their bag of sails and a pair of oars. Mr. Hobbs tried to whistle cheerily as he threw the sailbag over his shoulder. He felt that was what the picture called for. Internally, however, he felt physically sick as they lowered themselves into the dinghy.

The trip out to Dashaway was a nightmare. The dinghy had apparently been built for small children. Three full-sized people weighed it down almost to the gunwales. What had looked like sparkling wavelets from the pier suddenly became a menacing sea that slapped viciously against the sides of the tiny craft and hurled water over Mrs. Hobbs' ankles.

"Rog, couldn't you row so that all the waves don't come inside? I don't want to ruin these shoes."

"What in the world do you want to wear shoes like that for on a boat?" grunted Mr. Hobbs.

He glanced over his shoulder. The Dashaway was only a few feet from them, tugging at its mooring line like a trapped animal and rocking back and forth so that her mast seemed to slap the water on either side.

Mr. Hobbs looked despairingly at Mrs. Hobbs sitting calmly in the middle of the dinghy with her hands over her shoes. He prayed someone would put a stop to this suicidal expedition.

"This is fun," said Mrs. Hobbs. She removed her shoes and tossed them gaily into Dashaway's cockpit.

Mr. Hobbs could never remember how they managed to transfer from the tossing dinghy to the tossing sailboat. It was one of those feats of the sea he had read about as a boy but never expected to participate in, one of those incredible acts of derring-do he associated with the movies and adventure novels rather than with industrialists from Cleveland.

He straddled the centreboard box and shook the sails out of the bag.

"Now," he said, in what he hoped was a casual tone, "if someone will hand me the main halyard—"

"The what?"

"The rope that you tie on to the top of the sail to hoist it up."

"Why didn't you say so, dear? Where on earth do they keep it?"

A ganglia of ropes were slapping angrily against the mast. Shielding his eyes, Mr. Hobbs looked up at the masthead, which was behaving like an inverted pendulum. He was immediately forced to clutch the edge of the tiny half deck until the dizziness left him.

By tugging gently on each rope he eventually discovered one with a free end that had been hooked to the turnbuckle of a shroud. He unhooked it and inched his way cautiously back to the cockpit. It was a job requiring both hands. As a result the halyard slipped away from him and flew out into space, only to come flailing back past his head with the next roll of the boat.

"Gracious," said Mrs. Hobbs. "Shouldn't that thing be tied to something?"

"Catch hold of it," said Mr. Hobbs, "and hold it till I'm ready for it." He immediately devoted his attention to the pile of canvas at his feet. The job was easy to identify. He handed it to Kate. "You put that one," he said.

"How?"

"Darling, you've got to work it out. Now don't be helpless. Just go and work it out."

He passed the edges of the mainsail through his fingers until he came to a corner. That might be the top. He continued along the edge. Another corner. That could be the top. Good heavens, here was

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SOW VEGETABLES NOW



FRESHLY CUT VEGETABLES from the garden help the busy housewife save time and money. It is now the season for planting seeds of those shown above: celery, tomatoes, and marrows. Early squashes, cucumbers, pumpkins can also be set out now.

The end of the year is virtually a second spring for the planting of vegetable seeds

AT this time most seeds can be sown with reasonable prospects of good germination.

However, unless the gardener is extremely careful or skilled, seedlings can fail in almost any sort of soil if really hot, steamy weather is sustained.

Among the vegetable seed which can be sown early is cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts (for cold districts only), cabbage, beetroot, celery, and leek. Further sowings can be made of most of the cucurbits as well as many of the root crops.

Cauliflowers need an early start, as there are several varieties which take four, five, or six months to reach maturity. The long-season cauliflowers must be sown now if they are to fatten up in time for the table.

The variety Phenomenal Early is a four-months' type, but Phenomenal Main Crop takes six months before it is ready to cut. Early Italian and Early Eclipse if sown now will be ready to cut by the end of April, but

Autumn Giant takes from five to six months to mature, and large Asiatic about five months.

The seed should be sown in boxes of good quality loam, and the seedlings transplanted to the open when big enough to handle. The soil in the garden for this vegetable must be liberally manured and in first-class order or the curds will not be satisfactory.

Good rich soil is also necessary for broccoli, that generous vegetable which yields tasty, edible heads for months after the first big green head has been used. Cabbage and brussels sprouts are also hungry feeders and need the best of soil conditions always.

Grubs of the white butterfly and buff moth are the worst pests of the cabbage family. Like the grey aphid, they can be controlled with D.D.T. emulsion.

Celery needs rich, peaty soil, is subject to several serious diseases and many pests, but if grown in districts where such soils are available the tasty heads can be raised to perfection.

For the novice, Golden Self-blanching variety is the best to try, as it does not need hilling up and troublesome blanching.

There is still time during this second spring period to raise a successful row or two of carrots, parsnips, beetroot, and white turnips, while swedes are among the types that need an early start if they are to become big and tasty instead of hot and woody, as they often are if sown very late.

Root crops should be sown where they are to spend their entire lives (with the exception of beetroot), and the soil should not contain any fresh manure.

Seeds of cucumbers, pumpkins, marrows, and early squashes such as Table Queen or Custard can still be sown.

Two serious pests, the pumpkin beetle and 28-spot ladybird beetle, cause heavy losses, but can be controlled by dusting with derris powder. Spray the plants occasionally with lime-sulphur to check mildew.

Tomatoes can be sown still or plants set out now. These plants usually escape spotted wilt, and as their fruits are late, fruit-fly does not bother them as it does the summer crop. Spray the plants regularly with D.D.T. emulsion to check thrips, which carry wilt.

BREAK O' DAY tomatoes on the bush. They are strong growers and yield good fruit. They can be planted any time now.



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another corner. Why didn't they mark the thing "back," "front," and "top?" Maybe it didn't make any difference which you used.

A dinghy passed, containing two little girls who waved to Dashaway.

"Nice breeze," they called. Mr. Hobbs watched them with astonishment as they leaped casually aboard the next boat and went about the business of putting on the sail.

Ah, that was it! The top was the corner with the black number sewed just below it. Of course. How stupid. And the part that went along the mast had those little zipper things. Now he was getting the hang of it. He went in frantic haste, lest his models sail away and leave him helpless once more.

Somehow or other the sails were on and up, slatting savagely, as if resenting such amateur handling.

One of the little girls in the next boat took the tiller; the other went forward and cast off the mooring line. Their boat turned its cheek to the breeze with lazy grace, its sails filled, and it went dancing across Dashaway's bow.

"Race?" called the little girl at the tiller.

"You bet," shouted Mr. Hobbs. "Meet you out there." He tried to make his voice sound hearty and jovial, but it came out high-pitched and strained. Calm, Hobbs. In emergencies the leader must be calm.

"Now," he said, "untie the dinghy from the stern and tie it to the mooring can. Give it plenty of rope." He felt immensely pleased with himself as Kate carried out his order.

"You're wonderful," said Mrs. Hobbs admiringly.

"Cast off," he said nonchalantly. It was the nonchalance of an actor saying, "So long," to his pals in the big battle scene as he steps from his cosy dugout into a rain of shell-fire.

Kate's voice came back to him on the wind. "I can't untie this slimy rope from the tin can."

"Don't untie it for heaven's sake," he shouted. "Throw the tin can over with the rope."

"Don't you want it again?" asked Mrs. Hobbs. She had taken her place on the floor of the cockpit, one arm clinging to the centreboard box.

There was no time to be sarcastic. He heard the splash of the can buoy. Instead of veering off gracefully to the left as the other boat had done, Dashaway's sails continued to slat as it drifted downwind, threatening to swamp the dinghy.

"Why do you back out?" asked Mrs. Hobbs.

Mr. Hobbs did not bother to answer. He was pumping the tiller savagely. Dashaway suddenly lay down on its beam-ends and darted for the point where the little fleet was thickest.

"We're skidding," said Mrs. Hobbs.

It was true. Dashaway was going sideways through the water almost as fast as it went forward. This two-dimensional progress frustrated Mr. Hobbs more than anything that had happened to date.

"Pops, you're going to hit that boat off to the left if you don't stop drifting."

Drifting! It came to him suddenly.

"The centreboard," he screamed. "Will somebody drop the centreboard. I can't do everything."

"What are you yelling about?" said Mrs. Hobbs. "Don't yell at me, please. Just tell me quietly what to do."

"The centre—" began Mr. Hobbs. "Listen, Peggy. Undo that rope just under your right hand. That's it. It's just

twisted around that gadget. That's it. Then let the board down slow—"

Mrs. Hobbs screamed as the rope tore through her hands and then let it go. The knot at the end hit the slot in the centreboard with a thud that shook the boat. The rope held.

"Is that what you wanted?" asked Mrs. Hobbs. "It felt to me as if the bottom fell out. The thing almost took my hand off."

Mr. Hobbs' clenched teeth caused the muscles in his jaw to protrude. Dashaway had stopped going sideways, but it was now tearing through the water like a torpedo, pointed at four of its bobbing sister boats. In one of them two young men stopped putting on their sails to watch.

"Why don't you go around those boats?" asked Mrs. Hobbs. "There's no hurry. We've got all day. Gracious sake, Rog, we almost hit them."

Beneath the sail Mr. Hobbs caught a glimpse of the pale, gaping faces of the two youths as Dashaway flashed past their stern. Then he was miraculously through the fleet with nothing ahead but the dancing waters of the bay.

Kate came back to get out of the spray. "Gosh, Pops, I didn't know you could sail like that. I wouldn't have had the nerve to go through that mess of boats."

"Your father sailed in a Bermuda race, dear," said Mrs. Hobbs. "I have perfect confidence in him."

Mr. Hobbs did not hear. His mind was elsewhere. Dashaway was booming along with the wind almost behind it. Astern the white houses of Rock Harbor were already becoming fused by distance. Half a mile ahead and to the right was a rocky point. He decided that they would clear it nicely. Far ahead to the left was the light-house on the end of the sand spit that marked the harbor entrance.

They were headed straight for the open sea. Nothing to worry about, nothing to do but hold her as she was and relax. He threw back his head and enjoyed the movement of the wind in his hair, the same wind that had played in the hair of Drake and Froisher, Magellan and Cook and all the rest of that carefree band that had once roamed these waters—or at least waters that were very similar.

Kate lay stretched out on the forward deck, engrossed in her ceaseless struggle to be more sunburned than any other girl in America. Mrs. Hobbs sat on the floor of the cockpit, her face glowing with excitement and pleasure.

"Oh, Rog, I don't see why we don't do this all the time," she said dreamily.

A half hour passed. Suddenly Mr. Hobbs' grip on the tiller tightened. The unpleasant thought had just occurred to him that sooner or later he must go back. At the moment he was issuing from the neck of a funnel into unlimited space. Ultimately he must return to the funnel, against the wind, his goal no longer the open ocean but a tiny white can buoy bobbing in the centre of a score of boats.

At the thought of dashing into that melee and picking up his mooring in this howling gale, panic seized him. Rather than endure that humiliation under the critical eyes of a lot of little fat girls in pigtails he would turn when the time came, head straight for shore, and make a crash landing on the rocks. Or would it be better to keep on going, straight out to sea, and eventually get picked up by a passing freighter?

Steady. You're in a tight place. Think it through, boy. What would Magellan and Drake have done now?

At least it would be prudent to practise coming about while he had plenty of room for error. Slowly he brought Dashaway up into the wind until she was heading for the long sand spit that formed the south side of the harbor.

"Hard alee," he said.

"What did you say?" asked Mrs. Hobbs.

"We're coming about."

"What do I do?"

"Nothing."

She settled back contentedly into her corner. Kate raised a protesting face from the deck canvas. "Oh, Pops, just when I was getting comfortable!"

"When we come around, come back and let go the left-hand jib sheet and take in the right-hand jib sheet," said Mr. Hobbs sternly.

"Your father always likes to make things so complicated," said Mrs. Hobbs. The boat swung to port, and she slid away from the centreboard box and fetched up against the side of the cockpit. "Rog, for goodness' sake what are you doing! I was just getting used to that corner, and now look what you've done! No one could sit here, and you don't get any sun or anything. Can't you tip it back the way it was?"

Mr. Hobbs sailed on, unheeding. His mind had become a great navigating chart, on which he was plotting the steps necessary to bring his loved ones safely back to that can buoy. If he ever made it, he swore silently, he would never detach Dashaway from it again. He gave Kate the tiller and went forward to work on the problem with matches laid out on the canvas deck.

Finally, feeling as Einstein must have when he produced the equation that should unlock the universe, he took back the tiller. He headed for Rock Harbor, the wind on his starboard beam. A few hundred yards away the mast tops of the Spatterbox fleet continued to trace crazy arcs against the sky.

Now the first boats of the fleet were just to leeward. He hadn't realised how fast he was tearing through the water until the little white hulls gave him something against which to measure his speed.

He forced himself to rehearse once more the plan he had worked out so carefully. He was to run past the fleet as he was now until he came abreast of his mooring can. Then he was to let the sail out as far as it would go and at the same time make a right-angle turn to the left and head a little to the right of the mooring can. Then, just after he had passed the can, he must swing Dashaway smartly into the wind and let it come up to the mooring on its momentum.

Next he hooked the can with the boat hook. It was really a beautiful manoeuvre. He wondered at himself for having worked it out.

Now they were among the boats. The boom scraped the shrouds of one. They missed another by inches. Then they were abreast of the mooring.

"Ready with the boat hook, Kate."

"I don't see how you do it," said Mrs. Hobbs.

His chest swelled with pride at the compliment as he shot Dashaway into the wind with a flourish and coasted past the dinghy on the leeward side. Kate lay in the bow straining towards the can with the boat hook.

Dashaway went slower and slower and came to a stop a few feet away from the mooring. Then, like a playful terrier, it turned to the right and went

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lying across the rope connecting the dinghy to the can. He felt the rope go under the boat and apparently catch on the centreboard. They came to a straining halt with the dinghy glued to their right side and the mooring can to their left.

"What a funny thing," said Mrs. Hobbs.

"Let down the mainsail," roared Mr. Hobbs. No one paid the slightest attention. He leaped for the halyard and loosened it from the cleat, but the force of the breeze held the sail rigidly in place.

Then he had another inspiration. If he pulled up the centreboard the rope would slide along the bottom of the boat and they would be free. Shoving Mrs. Hobbs' cringing body to one side, he pulled the centreboard up. Dashaway lurched forward a few feet, then stuck again.

"What do you suppose?" said Mrs. Hobbs.

Kate had come aft and was peering over the stern.

"The rope's caught between the stern and the rudder," she said. "I can see it."

"Never again," cried Mr. Hobbs dramatically. "Never again will I come out with a gang that knows nothing whatsoever about sailing. The best man in the world couldn't handle a boat in a blow like this without some help. This ends it, I tell you, I'm getting rid of the boat —"

Kate had taken off her shoes and socks. Pushing her father

gently aside she lowered herself over the stern. Straddling the rudder she began to work the rope down with her feet. In a few moments they were free.

Dashaway immediately came up into the wind like a colt that gets tired of eluding its pursuers. Mr. Hobbs had forgotten to make the halyard fast, as a result of which the sail fell over their heads in voluminous folds. They were drifting downwind on to one of the boats. It was occupied by the two little girls who had wanted to race. They stopped putting the cover on their sail and watched the approach of Dashaway with open mouths.

Mr. Hobbs had tasted the dregs of the cup.

It was too bad in a way, as Mrs. Hobbs said, that the Carvers and the Grants were arriving at the same time, but she supposed young people had to take their vacations when they could, and probably it would be more fun for the men to be here together.

When they left, she and Mr. Hobbs would have Susan and Jane and the grandchildren all to themselves for the rest of the month. Then, she said, without explaining why, things wouldn't be nearly so confusing.

Mr. Hobbs agreed. He was in an agreeing mood, for in a short while his rapidly expanding family would be gathered together for the first time in over a year.

He had always looked forward to the grandfather period of his life, to reliving his early married days through a second generation, to watching its growth and development from day to day, and perhaps to having some small part in shaping it.

Now, for a few weeks at least, all these things would be possible. In Mr. Hobbs' moments of anticipation there was always an image in his mind of himself and Susan's four-year-old Peter rambling over the countryside hand in hand. It was probably inspired by a book of A. A. Milne's he used to read to the girls when they were little. In it there was a drawing of a man and a small boy walking on a beach.

The boy had curly hair framing an angel's face. He was holding the man's hand, and, as Mr. Hobbs remembered the text, the two were engaged in one of those extraordinary and charming conversations that seem to come so naturally either to English children or to the Englishmen who write about them.

Whether or not he had been influenced by this picture, Mr. Hobbs had gradually created an idyll in which he and Peter were the two principal characters — the man and the boy walking together, exploring, observing, learning, the one from the other. It was a vision of peace and order, a fusing of the two extremes of life into something rich and full.

All of which should not be taken to mean that Mr. Hobbs did not love his other two grandchildren deeply and tenderly. He did, of course, but little Pee-wee had been only a year old when Mr. Hobbs had seen her last, and Byron Dangerfield Grant, Jun., was only now completing his sixth month in the world.

Like most males, Mr. Hobbs' affection for beings that could neither walk nor talk was more of a tribute to their parents than to their personalities.

It was one of the few real disappointments of his life that his two eldest daughters, instead of settling down comfortably in their home town, had married men without roots, being apparently destined to

spend their lives in remote and unattractive places, all having the common attribute of being inaccessible to grandparents.

There was Susan, for instance, his intelligent, humorous, easygoing oldest daughter, who might have married half a dozen men of the type that would lead normal settled lives. Instead she had unaccountably fallen in love with an inarticulate engineer, Stewart Carver, whose ideal of a home was a place within walking distance of whatever huge and mussy building project he happened to be working on at the moment.

When Susan disappeared into the deserts, Mr. Hobbs had pinned his hopes on Jane. No two sisters had ever been more different. Susan was dark and, in the rare moments when her face was in repose, rather plain. Jane on the other hand was beautiful, her beauty crowned with a shock of golden-red hair. It was a beauty that made strong men grip the edge of tables when they first beheld it.

Perhaps it was just because life had been so bountiful and so easy that she suddenly lost her heart to a tall, gangly young man with unruly hair and a mouthful of teeth, who, of all things, taught economics at Pendergast University in Indiana. Whatever the reason, the miracle happened and she married Byron Dangerfield Grant.

At least, as Mrs. Hobbs said, the Grants didn't live in dust bowls and mudholes like the Carvers. And Pendergast wasn't so far away that she couldn't go out once in a while and hang over her grandson's crib with dreamy eyes that refused to see that Byron Dangerfield Grant, Jun., was doomed to look exactly like his beautiful mother.

"One thing," said Mrs. Hobbs, tapping her pencil against her teeth. "We'll have to buy a playpen."

"Why?" said Mr. Hobbs. "Just why do we have to buy a playpen? We pay an outlandish price for this house just because there are acres and acres of wild land around it for the children to run around in. Then the first thing we do is to drop them into a pen. What is this idea that the modern child mustn't ever play?"

"And there's another thing," said Mrs. Hobbs. "I've tried to borrow two cribs, but everybody seems to be using theirs. So I guess we'll have to buy a couple."

"Listen, Peggy, those things cost money. I'm not a maharajah or something. I make my money the hard way, and then the government takes it all and you expect me to keep on spending it like water. Besides, what are you going to do with all this stuff when we leave? We'll have to go home in a moving van."

"Do you want the children to sleep on the floor?"

"What would you do if we were very, very poor?" It was a device he used in such discussions, but Mrs. Hobbs had learned long ago to side-step these philosophical traps.

"I don't know what we'd do if we were very, very poor, and I don't much care. All I know is the babies have to have two cribs to sleep in."

"Will you help me get some of these things into the house?" called Mrs. Hobbs.

Mr. Hobbs sat up on the couch swing and peered sleepily over the verandah rail. The rear of the sedan was piled to the roof with cartons and packages, and the gaping baggage compartment was tied with a rope.

"Good heavens," said Mr. Hobbs. "Where are we going to put all this stuff? We ought to have rented a warehouse instead of a summer place. And who in the world is going to

pay for it all? Just because three little children decide to go to the seashore —"

"Listen, Rog, don't get so excited. You all go to pieces before you know anything about it. Most of this is basic stuff. Remember, you're going to have ten hungry mouths to feed. Then there were a few things I had to get, like an indoor drier, and an extra pot for boiling diapers, and a bathinette —"

"A what?"

"Oh, you know. A thing to bathe the baby in. That's about all. I had to lay in a lot of baby food, and — oh, yes — I got a stroller. We had to have something to take them out in."

"Are the Carvers and the Grants bringing anything except the children?" asked Mr. Hobbs, but Mrs. Hobbs was burrowing among the packages in the rear of the car.

"Isn't that stupid, Rog. I left the lifebelts and the curtains at Terrey's store. You'll have to drive back and get them for me. I've got too many other things to do."

"The lifebelts and the what?" asked Mr. Hobbs.

"Oh, darling, I just bought some inexpensive, ready-made curtains for the children's rooms. I couldn't stand those ghastly pink and blue things another minute. These are very cute. They have Mother Goose pictures on them."

"I see," said Mr. Hobbs. "By the way, do you think we'd have time to repaint the house inside and out before they get here?"

Mrs. Hobbs didn't bother to reply. She was struggling through the screen door with an armful of packages.

Mr. Hobbs untied the rope from the baggage compartment. Inside, jammed in among the packages, were three tiny rocking chairs. He unloaded them carefully and set them in a row on the driveway.

"Listen, Peggy," he called.

Mrs. Hobbs' voice came from somewhere within the house. "Just set everything on the porch, dear, and go down to the Carvers' before they close. And while you're in town, you might pick up a couple of bottles of catchup. We're having canned corned-beef hash tonight. I'm too tired to do any cooking."

After driving the entire length of Main Street three times, Mr. Hobbs finally found a parking place not too far from Elwell Terrey's General Store. Miss Haskell, Mr. Terrey's ageless, sexless clerk, met him just inside the door.

"Good afternoon," she said. "I've seen you around, but I don't think I know your name."

"Good morning," he said. "Hobbs."

"Oh, Mr. Hobbs — Grey Gables. I was wondering what you'd look like. Mr. Terrey and I were talking yesterday about how they'd jacked the price of that old place up this year. I guess when things are prosperous, though, people'll pay anything. I'm glad you dropped in. Mrs. Hobbs was here and left two packages. Wait a minute and I'll get them."

She disappeared through a door at the rear of the store.

Mr. Hobbs strolled past the sportswear counter and found himself in the toy department. He was examining a circular rubber swimming-pool when Miss Haskell returned.

"There you are," she said.

"Mrs. Hobbs said you had some grandchildren coming. Those collapsible swimming-pools are nice. They've put a terrible price on them, but for those that have the money they're nice. They didn't have contraptions like that when I was a girl, but it seems these modern kids have to be sitting in water all the time and throwing it around. They certainly are nice for that."

"How much are they?" asked Mr. Hobbs.

IT CAME FROM THE BIBLE

This week's award of £2/2/- for a Bible quotation has been won by Mrs. E. Fry, of 146 National Park St., Merewether, N.S.W.

HERE is her entry:

"People frequently refer to someone's favorite child or dearest friend as 'the apple of his eye.'"

"This phrase was first used in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 32, verse 10, where Moses is telling the people of God's great love for their nation: 'He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.'"

"The Bible also records the phrase by David, Solomon, Jeremiah, and Zachariah."

Readers are invited to send in Bible quotations whose frequent application has made them part of everyday language. Entries should give the book, chapter, and verse from which each quotation comes and an example of current usage.

Entries should be addressed "Bible Quotations," Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

"I really hate to mention it," said Miss Haskell. "Twenty-four-sixty. Seems awful, doesn't it? But I guess everything's that way, what with taxes and one thing and another. I see you looking at those big rubber horses. Those are nice, too, if you've got the price. The children like them when they go in bathing. They're handy for them if they get out beyond their depth and can't swim. You know how children are. We've got a fine line of velocipedes, too. Don't know where you're going to ride them around here without getting run over, but the kids go for them."

An hour later Miss Haskell and Mr. Elwell Terrey accompanied Mr. Hobbs to his car. Each carried a double armful of merchandise.

"You're sure going to be a popular grandpa," said Mr. Terrey. "Nothing like grandchildren though. All the fun and none of the cost, as I say to my wife. Just drop in on them when you feel like it and leave when you want. Not like with your own children. Well, goodbye now. We're certainly much obliged to you. Drop in next week. We've got a new shipment coming in."

"Where in the world have you been, Rog? You don't realise how much there is to do. Now listen, I've got an entirely new plan, and it's a wonderful improvement. Instead of having Susan and Stewart in the downstairs bedroom, where they can't hear the babies, I've decided to give them our bedroom. I knew you wouldn't mind." She smiled happily.

"If you didn't hate double beds so, we could leave our single beds just where they are, but you do, and that's that, I suppose. I've taken all the beds apart. All you've got to do is switch around the pieces and the mattresses, put them together again, and we're all set. Then I want you to take Pee-wee's crib out of the room at the head of the stairs and —"

Mr. Hobbs interrupted. "Now look, Peggy. After all, this is my vacation, too. I'll do anything at all for the kids if it makes any sense, but why in the world I should —"

Mrs. Hobbs was peering through the window of the sedan. "Roger Hobbs, what in the world have you got in that car?"

"Oh, just some little things I thought might be fun," said Mr. Hobbs uncomfortably.

"Fun!" There was a note of hysteria in Mrs. Hobbs' voice. "You talk to me about spending money. How much —"

"Listen, Peggy, why don't we talk about that later. If you've taken all the beds apart, I suppose that settles it, and we might as well get things shifted around while there's plenty of

light. I want to get into a pair of old pants."

He entered the house. Mrs. Hobbs followed him, smiling slightly.

The sound of an alarm clock jarred Mr. Hobbs out of a deep sleep. He knew immediately that this was an unusual day, but for the moment he could not recall what was to make it so. According to the clock the time was only six thirty. He could hear Mrs. Hobbs moving around the room.

Of course! Where were his wits? This was the day the Carvers arrived. But they weren't due until the twelve-thirty boat.

"What's the idea of getting up in the middle of the night?" he said.

"Because there are about ten thousand things to be done before everyone gets here, that's why. Please don't just lie there in a stupor, Rog. We're never going to get the place ready."

"What's the matter with it right now?"

"If you can't see for yourself, there's not much use trying to explain. At least get up so I can make the beds and get breakfast out of the way."

Mr. Hobbs opened his mouth to say something very funny. Then he thought better of it and swung his feet to the floor. Outside the ocean was brilliant in the early sunlight. It was a good day to be alive, and, once dressed and fully awake, he went about his chores with a light heart.

He liked the early part of the day, and each time he was forced by some uncontrollable circumstance to participate in it he resolved to make early rising a part of his routine thereafter.

"Please don't dawdle over your coffee," said Mrs. Hobbs. "You could be such a help if you wanted to."

"By doing what? You tell me what you want done, and I'll do it."

"Well, the living-room has to be cleaned up. It's all cluttered with your papers and letters and things. I wish you'd go through them and get rid of what you don't want."

"Why should a man start destroying his private papers just because his grandchildren are coming?" grumbled Mr. Hobbs. "Do you want me to throw away all your knitting too?"

He collected the offending papers and stuffed them into a drawer. It irked him to be hauled out of bed at six thirty in the morning to perform this simple task. "What else?" he bawled.

Mrs. Hobbs' voice came faintly from upstairs. "Look around," she said.

He did. For the life of him he didn't see what else could

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be done to the living-room. Did she want him to move all the furniture out on to the lawn and beat the rugs? He wandered aimlessly on to the porch. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and a soft, cool breeze from the sea tempered the rays of the morning sun. On a table lay the canvas case containing his surf-casting rod.

The back door slammed. He saw Mrs. Hobbs cross the lawn in the direction of the drying yard. He went into the house and reappeared a few minutes later dressed in a pair of bathing trunks, an old flannel shirt, and a pair of sneakers with holes in them. He took the casting rod and a tin box from the table and, with an uneasy glance towards the rear of the house, started down the steps.

"Roger Hobbs, where are you going?"

He stopped, feeling like a guilty schoolboy and irritated by himself because of it. "There didn't seem to be anything else to do around here so I thought I'd just go out to the beach for a few minutes," he said apologetically.

"Do you know what time it is? It's almost nine o'clock. If you get down on that beach, you'll never get back in time to meet the boat."

"I promise. Good heavens, dear, the boat doesn't come in for hours. Anyway, they've got their own car. I don't see why it's important to meet them."

"It is important," said Mrs. Hobbs. "It's very important. They've never been on the island before, and they have no idea where we live, and once you set foot on that beach you're perfectly irresponsible."

"I'll be back," said Mr. Hobbs. "I'll be back at half past eleven."

He stopped in front of the Ogden's white shingled cottage and sounded his horn. Mrs. Ogden, wearing a red cotton pullover and white shorts, came to the door. Rather luscious, thought Mr. Hobbs. Aloud he said, "Good morning, Joan. Do you think Jack would want to go up the beach with me for an hour or so?"

"He can't," said Mrs. Ogden decisively. "He's promised to do some things for me around the place."

Mr. Ogden appeared in the doorway behind her. "Hi," he said.

"Hi," said Mr. Hobbs. "I just stopped by to see if you wanted to take your rod and go down to the beach with me for half an hour or so. Joan says you're tied up though."

"Yes, I promised her I'd do some work around the place. I don't see why it can't wait for a while though. Going to be gone long?"

"No. Just down and back," said Mr. Hobbs. "I have to be home right away."

"Wait a minute while I get my rod," Jack Ogden disappeared into the house.

"I hate you," said Mrs. Ogden, and let the screen door slam. Spoiled type, thought Mr. Hobbs.

Mr. Hobbs liked to fish with Jack Ogden. Jack was a realistic sort of person who didn't waste time on the amenities. As soon as they reached the shore he selected his plug and then started off without a word, never stopping to cast until they were separated by at least a quarter of a mile.

They maintained this interval, working slowly down the beach, until the car among the dunes was hidden by intervening points and they were completely alone in a world of sand and sea and sky.

It seemed no more than an hour or two before he saw Jack Ogden working his way back towards him. It was time to quit. Mr. Hobbs walked back to the dunes and sat down on a bleaching timber. The sun seemed suddenly to shine more warmly, the blue water seemed more friendly, and Mr. Hobbs noted with surprise that dur-

ing the last few minutes the waves had subsided into inconsequential little rollers that a child could have handled.

Jack Ogden sat down wearily beside him. "Get anything?"

"Not a thing. How about you?"

"Not a nibble. Wonderful morning though."

"Wasn't it?" said Mr. Hobbs. Together they walked back to the car.

"I've got to begin thinking of the time," said Mr. Hobbs. "We're meeting that twelve-thirty boat. Couple of grandchildren pulling in."

He reached into the tin tackle box for his wrist watch. It was a quarter to one.

Mr. Hobbs was in the dog-house. He didn't need to be told officially. The emptiness and immaculate neatness of silent verdict. The old house seemed to say reproachfully, At least there was someone here who didn't forget. At least there was someone who worked tirelessly to put me in proper order while you splashed around childishly trying to catch something that wasn't there—and you knew it.

Filled with misery and self-pity, Mr. Hobbs sat down in the living-room. For the first time he noticed a piece of paper pinned to the mantel. He took it down apprehensively. It had been scrawled by Mrs. Hobbs in what, from all visual evidence, must have been a moment of considerable emotional tension.

"I was never so mad in my life. First you go off with that fool Ogden, leaving all the work to me. Then you forget to come home, leaving me without a car. (It was the first time Mr. Hobbs had thought of this complication.) Joan Ogden is taking me to the boat. For pity's sake, if it ever occurs to you to come home, stay at the house. See there's plenty of hot water, if that isn't asking too much, and don't use the clean towels."

Mr. Hobbs sighed remorsefully. The trouble with surf casting was that it took you to places where time was an artificial concept and even the meaningless recordings of a wrist watch were unavailable, as all such gadgets had to be left in the tackle box. But try to explain things like that to a woman!

He went out to the kitchen to find something to eat. The icebox was crammed with mysterious objects, wrapped

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neatly in waxed paper. He shut the door without further exploration and made himself a peanut-butter sandwich moistened with catchup. He despised peanut-butter-and-catchup sandwiches, but they were the only two ingredients in the kitchen he felt safe in using at the moment.

He wandered back to the living-room. Everything had such a scrubbed and ordered look that he hardly recognised the place. All extraneous objects had disappeared—probably forever, he thought resentfully, noting that several personal belongings were missing. Their places had been taken by vases of wildflowers, and there were great bunches of bayberry at each end of the usually littered mantel.

He went upstairs to check the hot-water heater, wash, and change his clothes. In the bathroom all the workaday towels and washclothes had been replaced by magnificent monogrammed affairs with the fat look he had learned to associate with guest towels.

He washed his hands and dried them on a handful of Mrs. Hobbs' paper handkerchiefs. Then he went to his bedroom to dress. The bureau drawers were all empty and lined with fresh pink paper. He remembered that he and Mrs. Hobbs had moved to the downstairs bedroom.

He eventually found an old pair of slacks, which he put on, and went down to the pump house. Might as well fill the tanks and be on the safe side. The pump house was his undisputed domain. Just to look out over the water, across the tops of the bayberry bushes, made him feel better immediately.

He sat down on a broken box and let his mind wander over the weeks that lay ahead. It was curious how the relationship of everything seemed to shift the moment grandchildren came on the scene. Susan and Jane, for instance, suddenly ceased to be his children and became his married daughters.

The change-over was a subtle one, but it was none the less real. With motherhood they had acquired new insights, a new wisdom, which made them almost strangers, although outwardly they were the same. Mr. Hobbs found himself slightly afraid of them,

and he instinctively knew that from now on this would always be so.

The change was not confined to Susan and Jane. He had noted it in Peggy also, although in her case it was more difficult for him to put his finger on just what it was.

She was probably living the days of her early married life over again through her grandchildren. The difference was that this was a vicarious experience she could go through alone and unaided. It was an emotional adventure entailing no real responsibility, an adventure in which the old parental team played no necessary part.

Mr. Hobbs rose impatiently. In a few minutes he'd be feeling sorry for himself. The forgotten grandfather! Nuts! He walked rapidly up the hill. As he reached the top, the Ogden's car turned into the drive, followed by a mud-encrusted station-wagon.

The inside of the station-wagon was piled to the roof with suitcases and cartons, between which odd bits of clothing and gear had been stuffed like mortar, until a semi-solid mass had been created. Young Peter Carver hung from one of the middle windows, glumly surveying the unfolding prospect. Peewee sat on a hanging seat between her parents. As the station-wagon came to a halt, she began to scream.

The front door of the station-wagon flew open. Susan and a large springer spaniel came bounding out together. Susan threw herself into her father's arms. "Pops!"

He kissed her; then, his hands on her shoulders, he pushed her away gently so that he could look at her. "Darling, you're wonderful. Gosh, I'm glad to see you."

"You've certainly been a big help," said Mrs. Hobbs. Mr. Hobbs' happiness faded like a mirage. He was shaking hands with his big son-in-law, however, and the need for rebuttal was postponed.

"Gracious," said Mrs. Hobbs. "I didn't know you were bringing a dog." The springer, who had been running in circles and barking furiously, had suddenly begun to throw himself on Mrs. Hobbs with joyful yelps.

"Of course, Mother. That's

Rumpus. We never go anywhere without Rumpus. Peter, don't you see Bumpa? Get out and give him a big bear hug."

"I don't want to," said Peter, moving to the other side of the station-wagon. "I don't like this place. I want to go home."

"But Peter, darling, this is Bumpa that you've talked about so much. Don't you like Bumpa?"

"No," cried Peter. He stuck his fists in his eyes and began to howl.

"He's tired," said Susan.

"Of course he is, poor little thing. For heaven's sake, Roger, leave him alone and help Stewart unload the car." "They'll be all right when they get some food in them and have a nap. I'll take Peewee and Peter and leave you and Stew to handle the junk, Pops. I wouldn't say anything to Peter right now."

She pulled Peewee out of the hanging seat and entered the house, followed by Mrs. Hobbs dragging Peter. It was not just the way Mr. Hobbs had planned it. Mrs. Ogden waved to no one in particular and drove away. Mr. Hobbs joined his son-in-law at the back of the station-wagon, feeling suddenly awkward.

"Well, Stew," he said heartily. "Good to see you."

"Good to see you, sir." That was it. This constant use of the word "sir." How could you ever be at ease with someone who was always calling you "sir?"

"How are things out in Los Alamos?" It was a silly question.

"Oh, fine, fine, sir. I hope everything's fine with you." It was an equally silly answer.

"Have a hard trip?"

"Oh, no, sir. Only four nights on the road. We drive pretty fast, and the kids are used to it. Peter always throws up a good deal the first day out. Then he settles into the groove. He's a good little traveller."

"I see," said Mr. Hobbs. He was dismayed to find that they had reached the end of their conversational rope in forty seconds flat, with ten days to go. A mountain of baggage was beginning to accumulate on the driveway.

"Stew," it was Susan at the front door. "Will you bring in the cartons with the children's things in it so I can get their supper started and get them to bed?"

Stewart Carver selected a bulging carton. "Excuse me, sir. I'll be right back."

"Don't hurry," said Mr. Hobbs.

"Yes, sir," said Stewart, and staggered up the steps with his burden.

Methodically and grimly Mr. Hobbs unloaded the dusty contents of the station-wagon, down to the last broken plastic toy, the last discarded paper handkerchief. The result lay about him on the driveway and lawn. It looked more like wreckage than baggage. Stewart did not return.

Well, there was no use standing here staring at the stuff. He picked up two suitcases and carried them up to the second floor.

On his way back to the car he stuck his head in the kitchen doorway. Mrs. Hobbs waved him away. "For goodness' sake don't come in here and add more confusion. Just get their things upstairs so we can get the children to bed."

Slowly, like the builders of the pyramids, he toiled upward with his burdens. No one paid any attention to him or told him what went where, so he piled everything in a huge mound at the head of the stairs.

With each trip he felt his strength ebbing, his heart pounding faster and faster. Each time he revolved through

the screen door, clutching a great carton or a suitcase, the thought occurred to him that this might be his last load. He wondered how it would feel. "Suddenly Mr. Hobbs' face turned ashen white. He spun around and pitched headlong down the steep steps, to lie unnoticed at the bottom."

The vision upset him so that he did not attempt to bring up the smaller packages and loose things, but merely piled them in the immaculate living-room wherever he could find a place.

Several hours later Mr. Hobbs stood before the living-room table. He stood because there was no place to sit down. The room was a shambles. The table and every chair was covered with half-opened packages, and the floor was littered with cartons, wrapping paper, toys, clothes, sneakers, battered picture books, and other oddments of family life.

Susan sat curled up on the sofa, her bare feet protruding from the edges of a striped beach skirt. Mr. Hobbs decided she must have Moslem blood in her. His oldest daughter had never been able to keep a pair of shoes on her feet once she crossed a threshold, and apparently she did not own a pair of stockings.

"I must say I think drinking ginger-ale in bare feet is about the sloppiest performance—" he began.

"Pops! What in the world has drinking ginger-ale got to do with whether you're barefooted or wearing rubber boots? Why do get yourself so worked up by a lot of fuzzy—"

"Because," said Mr. Hobbs. "There are some things that—"

"Now, listen, Roger. This is the first night. Stop fussing." Mrs. Hobbs' voice indicated that if they could get through this initial period she could cope with future violence.

Susan, quite unperturbed by the incident, sipped ginger-ale and watched Peter with loving eyes. He was engaged in removing objects from the tables and hurling them to the floor.

"Look," said Mr. Hobbs, as a heavy glass ashtray went down with a crash but miraculously did not break. "This stuff isn't mine. I have to pay for the pieces. Lay off it, Peter. Hey!" He caught a tottering lamp and pushed it to the back of the table.

Peter looked at him with hostile eyes and reached for a cigarette box. Mr. Hobbs set down his glass and approached him menacingly.

"Now look here, young fellow, I told you to lay off that. And when I tell you something, I mean it. Now listen to me. I don't want you to touch anything on those tables. Do you understand?"

For a moment Peter stared at Mr. Hobbs in astonishment. Then his face became contorted with anguish and he ran sobbing to his mother.

"For goodness' sake, Roger. What's the matter with you tonight?" said Mrs. Hobbs.

Susan looked troubled.

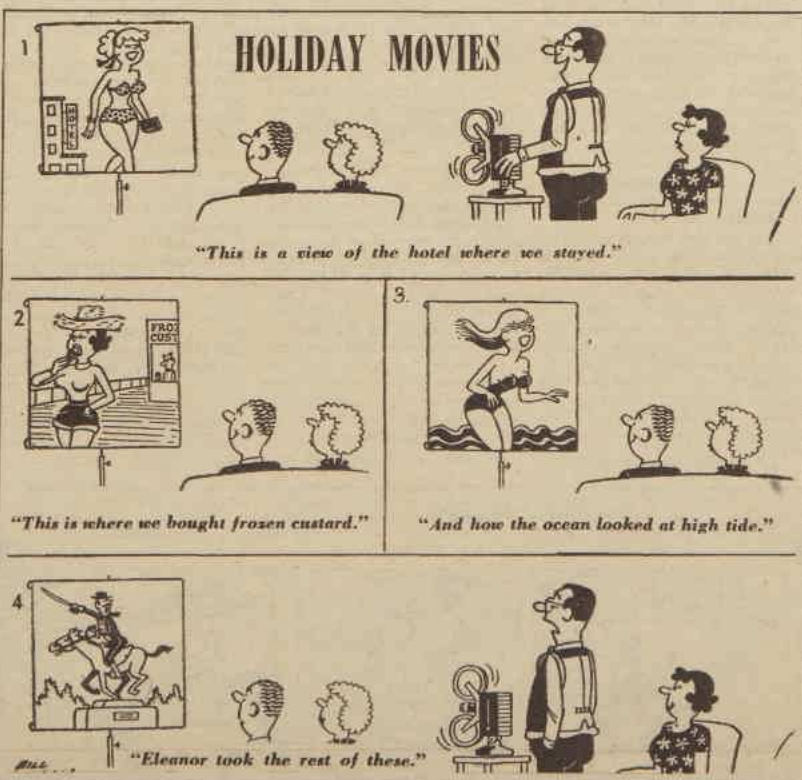
"I hate to say this, Pops, 'cause of course it's your house and everything, but Stew and I don't believe in that sort of thing. We never say no to either of the children. All the modern psychologists agree it's the only way to bring up kids without neuroses. If they're doing something you don't want them to do, substitute something else. All these ashtrays and things we'll just pile up on the mantel; then they can't reach them."

She began to remove objects from the table. The fire iron came down with a crash around Peewee.

Susan pulled her out from under them. "That's all right. She's not hurt. Just scared. Here, dear, you can play with them now."

Mr. Hobbs took a long, deep breath.

To be concluded



act in it, that's for sure. Talent is as unmistakable in the long run as red hair. You haven't got it.

I have never had such a crick in my back in all my life. I've been typing for three and a half hours. I'm faint for sleep. Go hang, Marjorie Morgenstern. I really don't love you any more.

Noel.

There was a handwritten postscript:

3.20 in the afternoon, same day.

P.S.—Well, I've just read it over once. I'm sealing it up fast. It's probably the most nasty, abominable, drivelling screed anybody ever wrote. I was drunk, all right. If nothing has ever disgusted you with me before I'm sure this will. So I'll send it as it is. There is only one untruth in all these pages, all the same, and that is in the very last line. I hope with all my heart it will be true in a few days, a few weeks, a few months. Because it is the only way out for both of us. There is no hope. Goodbye, my love.

N.

When Marjorie arrived at rehearsal that day she took another blow. ill-prepared as she was for more evil news.

The play she was in was called "The Bad Year." She was cast as a prostitute. The play was a farce about a small-town spinster of thirty-five who inherited a fortune and came to New York to live wildly for a year before settling back into small-town life. There were complications involving city gangsters and a doctor from the small town who was in love with the spinster. The chief comic idea of the play was that the spinster rented a room in a brownstone bordello in Manhattan under the misapprehension that the place was a boarding house. It took her most of the play to be undeceived.

All Marjorie had to do in the play was to sit around in her underwear with five other girls for a few minutes during each act, smoking, drinking, and in general conveying depravity as well as she could with pantomime.

In the original script, each of the girls had had a few lines to speak. But Guy Flamm had pointed out to the author that as soon as an actress uttered a syllable on stage she had to be paid the Equity minimum salary for all rehearsals and try-out performances, whereas, if she said nothing, she could be signed on as an extra for a fraction of the cost.

The author, a sad little bald man, was putting up all the money to produce the show himself. It was his Broadway debut, though he had written (so the report went among the cast) seventeen unproduced plays. He made his living as a partner in a firm manufacturing lawn sprinklers. His approach to the production was consistently frugal; and he had willingly revised the script so that there were now five silent prostitutes and one loquacious one who spoke all the lines the others had had. Marjorie's part was one of the silent ones.

It wasn't much of a part and it wasn't much of a play, as Marjorie had frankly admitted to Noel. But she had come a long way since the day after her graduation from college, when she had hesitated over taking the part of Clarice in Guy Flamm's production of "Down Two Doubled." Her only reservation in going to the first try-out of "The Bad Year" had been that Flamm might be embarrassed at the sight of her, so that she would have no chance at all. But he had picked her out of a line of several others, and thereafter at rehearsals had made no sign of recognition. Evidently he had forgotten his short encounter with her.

Continuing . . . Marjorie Morningstar

[from page 14]

She raised her bowed head and blinked at him.

"Frankly, Margie, you never have fitted the part. If I hadn't disliked upsetting you I'd have let you out the second day you rehearsed. You just don't look like a prostitute, my dear. You're much too fresh and sweet. That underwear you had on was really exquisite, by the way. Trouble was, it made you look less a bad woman than ever. I'm afraid you looked like a nice college girl fresh out of the shower, dear, in the middle of getting dressed for a big evening. Now, don't pout, don't you realise what a precious quality that is? There are a million girls on Broadway who can look like prostitutes. Where did you get that slip, my dear?"

"B-Bergdorf's."

"Bergdorf's, eh? What does your father do, Margie?"

"Why . . . he's an importer, Mr. Flamm." Marjorie said, with a dim, incredulous suspicion of what Flamm might be getting at.

"Marjorie dear, would it be a consolation to have a star part in a brilliant comedy, instead of a walk-on in a trivial farce? Because between you and me, dear—and we can be frank now—that's all 'The Bad Year' is. Now this play is something else again, believe me!"

To Marjorie's mingled disgust and amusement, he brought out of a drawer an extremely worn script of "Down Two Doubled"—it might have been the same one Marjorie had been handed two years ago, the cover was a scuffed, faded red—and slapped it dramatically on the desk.

He had had his eye on her from the first try-out day, he said, for a star part in this play, the most massive opportunity any young actress could ever hope for; and now, just this evening, the very charm which had disabled her had practically convinced him that Clarice was Marjorie's destined break into Broadway. He ordered her to absorb Clarice into her very soul, and then come to see him the day after "The Bad Year" opened.

It seemed utterly beyond belief to Marjorie that he should fail to remember her, even at this point. She sat staring passively at him while he gazed through the Clarice discovery scene, waiting for him to recognise her and collapse into embarrassment. She could recall every detail of that first encounter with him; he had even commented on her name, Marjorie Morningstar! How could it have passed so totally from his mind?

But the fact was, it had. The old faker had done this, or things like this, so often with so many girls, that she was no more to him than a face in a parade; and she was still trying to think of a devastating way to denounce him when he shook hands and ushered her out of the office, thrusting the script into her hand as he opened the door.

She went to her dressing-

room and gathered up her few belongings, including an advance copy of the Philadelphia theatre programme with her name in it. Stolidly enduring the sympathy of the girls, she turned off their questions about the red script with a shrug, put it in her little valise, and said goodbye.

She walked up Broadway in a cool, foggy night. There was no plan in her walking, she simply walked on and on, enjoying the cool air on her hot face. At Columbus Circle she stepped beside a trash basket, opened her valise, and took out the script of "Down Two Doubled." She glanced at the battered red script with a smile which, for complexity and secret sadness, might have rivalled the Mona Lisa's, had a painter caught it. The script fell in the basket with a dry

Children now love luxury, they have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect for elders and love to chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants and not slaves of the household. They no longer rise when an elder enters the room, they contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up the food at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannise their teachers.

—SOCRATES (talking of children 2000 years ago).

rustle and disappeared under tumbling, loose newspapers; and the girl went down into the subway.

Marjorie's purpose in going to work for her father was simple enough. She intended to save money as rapidly as possible, take a boat to Paris, and get Noel back once for all to marry her.

Cruel and crushing though his huge letter was, it did not seem to her—now that she had had a few days to think it over—as final as he had intended it. Its weakness lay in its excessive finality. If he were so utterly through with her, would he have bothered to take so many typewritten pages to say so? A man who had to cross an ocean to free himself of a girl was far from free of her when he bought his ticket—whatever he said in a letter. So Marjorie figured.

She missed terribly a friend or a counsellor of some kind; she even thought of talking the problem over with her mother.

Her parents had been surprised but pleased and relieved at her request to work for her father, just as she was sure they were relieved at the news, which she gave out as casually as she could, that Noel had gone to Paris to study. Once or twice she made a tentative start at talking to her mother about the whole affair; but then she shrivelled and shut up. The hungry eagerness with which her mother responded, and began to pry, brought out all her old barbed defences.

It was absolutely not pos-

sible, after all, to reveal to her that she had slept with Noel, and no intelligent talk was possible except in the light of that ugly fact. Marjorie knew that both her parents suspected the truth. Her excuses for coming home late at night, towards the end of the affair, had grown pretty lame. But she decided to let them go on suspecting, lonely though it left her, rather than give her mother the victory of knowing the truth by the confession of her own mouth.

A letter arrived from Noel after she had been working for her father about a month. Postmarked in Florence, typed on yellow paper, it bore no return address.

"I don't want to hear from you, dear," it began. "I just thought you might want to know that I didn't throw myself off the ship half way across out of sheer longing for you, or anything. In fact I'm fine, brown as a peon and having a gay if somewhat confused time."

He had intended to enrol in the Sorbonne as soon as he arrived, he wrote, but Paris looked too marvellous when he got there, and he decided to put off his studies till the fall. He had already been in Switzerland, Holland, and Norway, as well as France and Italy. There was much talk in the letter of a woman named Mildred and a couple named Bob and Elaine, all of whom he had met on the boat. Mildred dominated the group and seemed to be paying some or all of everybody's expenses.

"Mildred wanted to see The Hague, so she hired a limousine . . . nothing would do for Mildred but she must fly to Rome that very night, so back went all our clothes in the suitcases."

It was a fair guess, Marjorie thought bitterly, that Mildred was the woman in the red suit. She was at first angered. Then she had a spell of revulsion for a day or so when she thought she was free at last of her passion for Noel. Then the mood passed, and she was exactly where she had been before, only more anxious and exasperated.

It was impossible for her to get interested in other men. She tried. She trotted in her parents' wake to temple affairs, to weddings, even to a mountain hotel when the calendar dragged around at last to another summer. She encountered many pleasing young men, and a couple of extraordinarily attractive ones. But with the best will in the world she couldn't warm to them, couldn't sparkle, couldn't appear alive. There was something so forbidding about her that most of the men didn't try to kiss her.

It wasn't that Marjorie was being loyal or faithful to Noel. She couldn't help herself. Her mind and her heart were sealed shut, and that was all. She was a wife. She had long ago got over regarding Noel as a paragon. She knew his weaknesses all too well. Unhappily, she had committed her soul and her body to him, and now he owned her and was in her blood—marriage or no marriage.

How persuasive Marsha had been, urging her to sleep with Noel, Marjorie thought—how

persuasive, and how wrong! It had all been a lot of patter from books and plays, no more. She wondered what manner of love affairs Marsha's experiments could have been, to leave her so misinformed about sex. It was all very well to prate of trying a lover, and seizing one's chance of joy, and creating sweet memories to warm one's old bones; but the brute fact was that having an affair with a man was a plunge into change, shocking irreversible change like an amputation.

It was not a dip in a pool, after which one came out and dried the same body with the same hands. And as for the much-vaunted memories, far from treasuring them, she found them a continuing torment which she would willingly have burned from her brain cells. The sex had been, in the best moments, shaking, lovely; but even in those best moments it had been darkened by reservations, fear, and unconquerable shame. Yet for this sex, good or not so good, she had paid a steep price. Marjorie felt rifled of her own identity. She felt that Noel had it, that Noel was now her other larger self, that she was a walking shell.

She tried not to think of what would become of her if she failed to recapture Noel. Panic swept her whenever she really faced the thought that he would never take her in his arms again, never marry her. Her hope in life depended on getting Noel back. Determined as he was to escape her, she was yet more determined to bring him to bay.

And she believed that in the end she was going to win. All Noel's show and power were on the surface; she knew now that at heart he was rather weak. When hard pressed he ran. A man who ran could be caught.

Her greatest hope was that this flight to Paris was the last gasp of the old Noel, the last effort to fight off "respectability." She was in no hurry to follow him to Europe; he had to exhaust this fling. Instinct told her that he wanted her, at bottom, more than anything else in the world. He missed her now, and was missing her more and more. She could feel the tugs on the cord which fettered him to her across the wide ocean, in the occasional jaunty, jeering letters he sent her, always without a return address, usually postmarked Paris, once Cannes, once London.

In the end—this was her view in the optimistic turns of her up-and-down emotional storms—while he might never return to her of his own accord, he would be overjoyed to see her come after him; he would throw up smoke-screens of cynical words to mask his surrender—to time and fate, as much as to her—but he would surrender with relief.

However, all this was merely the substance of her comfort during this black, black year. It was comfort that came and went in her own mind with the shifts of her moods, and it alternated with moods of despair and terrible pain; pain so deep that the pain in a dentist's chair, when she had to go, was a distraction and a relief. She often cursed the day she had met Noel, and her own fatuous hero-worship which had enabled him to swallow three years of her life, three of her best years, the years when most girls met and married their husbands.

There was hardly a week during that black winter when she didn't have a cold, or a cough, or a fever. She had paralysing headaches much of the time, and recurring mysterious rashes, sometimes on her face, so that she could not go to work. She had no appetite, month after month. She forced herself to eat, to shut off the anxious nagging of her mother

FOR THE CHILDREN

Wuff, Snuff & Tuff



by TIM

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and the pained glances of her father. The food tasted like straw.

She faded so visibly that her parents at last drove her to see a doctor. After a long physical examination he questioned her about her emotional life, looking ironical and wise, and gave her a variety of pills, capsules, and liquid medicines. These did relieve some of the worst symptoms, but all winter long she went on feeling weak, irritable, and played out.

And all winter long her bank balance mounted. The mark she was aiming at was seven hundred dollars. For that amount, she had learned, she could go to Europe, stay there three weeks, and return, travelling third class.

But she was not saving quite fast enough; this worry gnawed at her more and more.

Often she thought of borrowing from her parents. She had almost five hundred dollars, and another two hundred or so would send her on her way. But she couldn't do it. Noel was her problem. It was up to her, she felt, to meet the situation with her own efforts, and it suddenly occurred to her that she could almost double her rate of savings by working evenings as a movie cashier. She got a job two days later.

Her parents protested; she was too run-down for night work, they said. Mrs. Morgenstern remarked in despair that Marjorie seemed doomed to swing from one extreme of foolishness to another. The father raised her salary, hoping in this way to make the night work unnecessary. She accepted the raise, because she had been drudging faithfully in the office and thought she deserved it; but she kept on with the movie job.

It wasn't hard work, but it wasn't healthful. The heating unit in her cashier's booth was faulty; usually she was either freezing or on the verge of being cooked alive. Within three weeks a severe grippé put her out of action. She came home chilled through and went straight to bed.

"How about some hot tea?" Her father stood in the doorway in pyjamas and an old grey bathrobe, his grey hair rumpled, with some strands standing up almost straight. He carried a glass of milk in one hand, a cup of tea in the other.

"Thanks, Papa. I'd love it." Mr. Morgenstern sat on the edge of her bed and sipped his milk, regarding her in a disturbing way. Since she had begun the movie job she had often caught him, in the office and at home, directing this same odd look at her. He said after a while, "Marjorie, it's enough already, isn't it? How sick do you want to make yourself? What's it all about?"

Marjorie said nothing. "Look here," the father said, "thank God, we're not poor. Business hasn't been so bad lately. What is it you want? A fur coat? Clothes? A trip? I'm still your father."

Still she said nothing.

"Mama says you want to go to Paris. After him. To bring him back."

Marjorie laughed shortly, despite herself; and the laugh was a confession.

The father shook his head, drank off his milk, and sat staring at her. "Remember that time at South Wind? It seems so long ago. The time we talked, out on the lake, in the rowboat—remember what you said? How did you put it? You were just going to enjoy his company and have a glorious time—this was the United States, you didn't have to worry about marriage."

"I—Papa, I wasn't so very old, you know."

"It doesn't work out that way, does it, Marjorie? Not even in America."

"No, Papa. Not even in America. Not for me, anyway."

Continuing . . . Marjorie Morningstar

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The father ran his fingers through his hair, rumpling it more.

There was a long silence. He said, "Tell me, does he mean as much to you as that? Even after a year? There are so many men in the world. Does it have to be him?"

Something pathetic in his tone, and in his look, brought a catch and a dryness to her throat. "Papa," she said, "I'm a girl, you know. I can't help it."

He came and stood beside her. His hand embraced her head, and pressed it gently to his side. "Listen, he has fine qualities," Mr. Morgenstern said. "A lot of fine qualities. If that's it, that's it. He'll be our son. . . . You'll go next week. . . . All right?"

"No, Papa, no. That isn't what I want."

"Why not? Do you want to go, or don't you?"

"I—I almost have enough money now for a third-class ticket. Thanks, anyway."

"Third class? Your first trip to Europe? You'll go first class."

"No, I can't."

"Mama says we should send you, and right away. Enough of this foolishness—working nights, getting sick, fading to nothing. . . . She's right. She's usually right, isn't she?"

"Papa, listen—"

"You'll go first class, I say. I'm still your father." His voice was taking on the harsh business tone. "It's settled. You leave next week. . . . And since you're such an independent girl now, Marjorie, you can owe me the money."

He kissed her hair brusquely and hurried from the room.

Marjorie's parents, brother, cousins, aunts, and uncles, with a few people from her father's office, came eddying down a long passageway and poured into her cabin, exclaiming at the luxury of the furnishings. Flowers and fruit baskets were banked around the spacious room; champagne was cooling in silver buckets on the deck; and there were trays of sandwiches set here and there on the bureau and tables.

Marjorie, in a near-trance of excitement, directed the steward where to put her bags, while her mother, glancing rapidly at the cards on the flowers, said, "Where did the champagne come from? Who ordered it? Did you, Arnold? You, Seth? What is it, a surprise party?" One after another the relatives denied having provided the wine; then a muffled voice from a corner of the crowded cabin said, "Compliments of an old friend, Mrs. Morgenstern."

The crowd of aunts and uncles parted like an opera chorus to disclose, sitting in an armchair, a young man with a large nose, in a handsome grey tweed suit, his clever eyes twinkling behind big black-brimmed glasses. There was a buzz among the relatives, inquiries as to whether this was Marjorie's boyfriend, whether they were engaged, and so forth.

Marjorie introduced Wally with some embarrassment to the family; but Wally, not at all embarrassed, got out of his chair and drew cheers by popping the corks of the champagne bottles. The steward passed around glasses; the wine flowed and foamed; Wally drew more cheers by proposing a toast to Marjorie. The guests fell on the food, and the party became very gay, and there was much kissing and hugging, especially among the young unmarried cousins.

Marjorie was surprised and touched to find among the gifts a huge bouquet of roses

from Seth. Reckoning up how many weeks of allowance the bouquet must have cost, she pulled him aside and kissed him. He blushed as red as his roses, muttering something incomprehensible.

Wally came to her, bottle in hand, while she was looking at the gifts. "More champagne?"

She held out her glass. "This was nice of you, Wally. I'll never forget it."

"Got two minutes for me?"

"Three."

"Drink up, and come."

They left the party, which had spilled over into the passageway, and went to a corner of an immense and peculiarly silent salon, containing acres of empty armchairs and couches. "You're looking better than ever," he said, his voice deadened and thin in the vast room.

"Well, you would think so. But thanks, Wally, anyway."

"I just wanted to tell you I've sold my play, Margie."



"When we went on our vacation they took care of our parakeet for us."

"Gosh! Sold a play! There's no keeping up with you, is there?" Looking at him, she thought that this must be the true air of success: no conceit or obvious triumph, but a forthright glance, a confident smile, a good-humored, distant gentleness. Noel had never had this look about him, not even at the dress rehearsal of "Princess Jones"; he had always been ironical, tense, and either weary or over-exuberant. "Which play is it, Wally?"

"It's a new one. I don't think I told you about it. A farce about radio."

"Have you quit your gag-writing job?"

"Oh, no. The play won't go on till the fall. How do I know it'll be a hit? I like those weekly pay cheques."

"Who's the producer?"

He told her the name, one of the better-known ones. She said, "I guess you've arrived, Wally."

"One production doesn't make a career."

"Nothing will stop you. I'm proud I've known you. I'll always admire you from the sidelines."

"From the sidelines? What's happened to Marjorie Morningstar?"

Marjorie said with a smile that was brave enough, "She didn't quite make the grade. It's just as well, I guess. There's millions like me for one like you, and that's as it should be."

"Well, then, how about Marjorie Wronken?" He said it in such an off-hand way, without smiling, that she was baffled.

"Why, sure, dear. You take my breath away. Let's get the

captain to marry us, this very minute, before you change your mind."

"His eyes didn't waver behind the glasses. 'You think I'm fooling, of course.'"

"When did I see you last? Six, eight months ago? I don't blame you for rubbing it in, Wally. You always told me you were a genius, and it seems you were right. My apologies for being so slow to realise it. Okay?"

He said, "I've been hunting this deer for years to lay at your feet. Now you won't even glance at the carcass. I feel abused."

Marjorie looked in his face for a moment. "I don't know whether you enjoy tormenting me, or what. You have a cute way of putting these things, so that I'd look like an idiot if I took you seriously. If I were to turn on you right now and say, 'All right, take me, I'm yours,' you'd probably scout out of here like a jack rabbit."

He looked offended, then he burst out laughing. "Well, what I'd do more likely is faint from astonishment."

They walked back to her stateroom without more words.

When the ship edged away from the pier, to the thunder of boat whistles and the crash of a brass band, the last figures Marjorie could discern in the blurring mob on the pier were Seth and Wally Wronken, shoulder to shoulder, waving their hats in the air. It all seemed to go very fast.

Soon the great ship was out in the river, and she couldn't see the pier at all through the black smoke of the tugs, butting the ship and squawking.

She was on her way to Noel.

The vessel began to vibrate with its own power. Marjorie strolled forward on the boat deck. In the widening lower bay the land view became flat and dull. The view out to sea was tumbling grey clouds and heaving grey water. The ship began to roll more, in a slow, majestic way. The wind freshened and became much colder; the passengers drifted rapidly from the rails.

Marjorie found herself standing not six feet from a medium-sized slender man with a rather young face and greyish hair trimmed close. He was leaning on the rail, hatless, smoking a long cigar. His coat hung over his arm, neatly folded. As the rail emptied between them, he glanced at her with a slight, pleasant smile. She answered with a half-smile and looked out to sea again.

She had noticed this man before at the gangway desk. He had checked in directly ahead of her. His assured manner with portfolio and travel papers, the straight way he held himself, the dressy grey topcoat and grey Homburg hat, the diagonal bluish scar across his forehead had caught her attention; she had guessed—in her generally excited frame of mind—that he might be a diplomat, or perhaps some well-known playwright or newspaper correspondent.

At once she had compared him in her mind with Noel; she always did that when she saw an interesting man. In his leanness, with his tanned bony face, he was not wholly unlike Noel; but he was shorter, and, if anything, a bit slither.

He wasn't nearly as handsome as Noel; but he had just the look, she thought now, with another glance towards him, that Noel strove for and for some reason missed. Possibly not being Jewish, as this man rather obviously was not, made the difference.

There had always been something exotic about Noel. The wavy thick blond hair, the charged blue eyes, the height, the energetic gestures, the very handsomeness had all given him a touch of extravagance. This man's appearance was dry, plain, adult; almost he might have gone unnoticed in a crowd. The contrast of grey hair and a young face, the scar, and a curious quiet keenness in his expression were what marked him off.

He said, glancing at her again and smiling as he met her eye, "We seem to be almost the last brave ones. Isn't it too cold for you?"

"Well, it's all so new to me, I hate to go below and miss a moment of it."

"Your first crossing?"

"Yes."

"The weather should have been better. The city looks grand in sunlight from the river. This is a pretty sad sailing." He strolled along the rail and leaned beside her. The scar drew her eyes at this close view: faded blue, with faint stitch marks, running from under his hair slantwise to his left eye. Somehow it was not exactly a disfigurement, but a trait, a mark, that belonged to the face.

She said, "It's just as well. I don't feel sparkling, exactly. I've never said so many good-

byes all at once. It's depressing."

He looked at the book under her arm with mild curiosity. She had taken it along upon leaving the cabin, thinking she might settle down for a while in a deck-chair. "Are you an English teacher?"

"No, I'm not a teacher. Why?"

"It hardly seems you'd be reading 'Tom Jones' for fun."

"Well, I've run through all the good mysteries. This is not bad. It's long, anyway. I guess I'll have plenty of time to read."

He smiled, looking down at the tourist-class deck, which was full of young people, chattering and laughing with exaggerated gaiety in the first moments of getting acquainted. "I'm afraid you will, in first class."

"Oh! Should I have gone tourist?"

"Well, no. First class looks so alluring and unattainable from below; it's better to find out how tame it really is, first time out. You'll never feel underprivileged after that."

"You make it sound unpromising."

"Do I? I guess I'm talking like this because the weather is so grey. You'll love your crossing, I'm sure."

There was a burst of laughter from a cluster of girls along the rail below, surrounded by young men. One of the men, in an American Army uniform, said something in a baritone laugh, and the girls shrieked again. "I can't help feeling I'm missing something," Marjorie said.

"The joke might not have amused you. They look like college girls."

"It's fun just to laugh in company sometimes," Marjorie said, "amused or not."

"I think you're better off with Fielding."

"He's been dead such a long time," Marjorie said. "You're not a teacher, are you?"

"No; just a business man. Chemicals is my line. . . . Am I mistaken, or did your face fall?"

"Why, not at all. Why should it?"

"Because business men are dull."

"Not necessarily."

"Well, yes, maybe necessarily. Making money is dull work. That's one reason why first-class passengers tend to be dull." He puffed at his cigar. After a moment, resting his elbows on the rail, he said, "My name is Michael Eden."

"I'm Marjorie Morgenstern." She looked for a flicker of reaction to the Jewish name, but there wasn't any. He nodded, his eyes turned to the horizon, where the land was shrinking to a lead-colored line. She said, "I am getting cold, after all. My legs, mainly. It's a freezing wind. But it smells so wonderful, so clean and fresh—"

"You'll have five whole days of it. You may as well go below and warm up, like all the other sensible people. I like to watch the land until it's gone."

"You've travelled quite a bit, I gather."

"Yes. And you haven't."

"I haven't been west of the Hudson or east of Jones Beach. I should think watching the

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Notice to Contributors

PLEASE type your manuscript or write clearly in ink, using only one side of the paper. Short stories should be from 2500 to 4000 words; articles up to 1500 words. Enclose stamps to cover return postage of manuscript in case of rejection. Every care is taken of manuscripts, but we accept no responsibility for them. Please keep a duplicate. Address manuscripts to the Editor, The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 408W, G.P.O., Sydney.

land vanish is just for neo-phytes like me."

"Not at all. It's the second best moment of the trip for me. The best moment is when I see it again, the good old U.S.A., still there, poking its big snout up over the horizon." He smiled at her. It was a peculiarly bleak, cool smile.

She said, pulling her coat about her, "Say goodbye to the good old U.S.A. for me, will you? I'm giving up."

She found that her steward, an amiable little white-headed man with an enchanting British accent, had put the room perfectly in order. He pressed her to have tea; she agreed, expecting a pot of tea with perhaps a few cookies, but he brought her a lavish spread of sandwiches and exquisite cakes. When she could eat no more, most of the food remained.

She was in a large double bedroom on A deck with real beds, panelled walls, and smart, severe drapes and furniture, all in rich tones of brown and grey. It was the off-season, so Marjorie was travelling in fantastic lone luxury. She took off her suit, put on a new silk housecoat, and propped herself on a bed with "Tom Jones." The bed rocked slowly, easily; far from making her uneasy, it was the pleasantest sensation in the world. She had not felt so calm, so relaxed, so good, it seemed to her, since her girlhood days, before her first fatal glimpse of Noel Airman at South Wind. There was something miraculously liberating about being on a ship.

She tried to read, but she could not; her eyes rested unmoving on the page, while her mind went over the conversation with the man on the boat deck. How old was he? Hardly forty, despite the grey hair; he might not be over thirty-five.

"Mike Eden," she said aloud, for no reason. The sound of her own voice startled her; she nestled in the pillows, and forced her attention back to "Tom Jones."

"Falling in love with love is falling for make-believe, falling in love with love is playing the fool..."

It became obvious to Marjorie, on the first night of the crossing, that that song was going to remind her of Michael Eden for a long time. It was a favorite of the ship's musicians, a group of four who played Beethoven quartets in the afternoon in one of the smaller salons, Victor Herbert melodies at dinner, and reasonably inflamed jazz after ten at night in the vessel's night-club, a charming little oval room called the Verandah Grill on one of the highest decks, with tall windows looking out on the darkling ocean and the gently swinging moon and stars.

The musicians were playing "Falling In Love With Love" when she came into the night-club with Eden for the first time, shortly before midnight. They played it twice more that evening and several times each evening thereafter.

Eden had asked her to dance, but at first he danced rustily, in a stiff, formal way, and seemed rather bored. But then he warmed to it, and Marjorie found herself enjoying his dancing. She enjoyed talking to him, too. While they sipped their drinks he asked sharp questions about "Tom Jones," seeming to know the book by heart. He said the only people writing like Fielding nowadays were a few mystery writers.

"Well, thank heaven somebody has a good word for the mystery writers," she said. "My — the fellow I go with — has nagged at me for years because I read mysteries."

"He's a snob," Eden said. "There isn't a mystery I won't read. I think, next to doctors,

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detective story writers are the chief benefactors of mankind."

"He is a snob," Marjorie said. "He's the worst intellectual snob I've ever met. But at least he admits it."

"Where is he now?" "In Paris. I'm going there to run him to earth and make him marry me. If I can."

Eden's smile was usually controlled and careful, his eyes remaining sombre, but now a wholly different look came over his face, a charming gleam of warm appreciation and pleasure. Like a sunny break in the clouds on a grey day, it came and went. "Is that really why you're going to Europe?"

"Yes."

"Well, I bet you'll succeed." Marjorie inclined her head towards a table on the other side of the dance floor. "That blonde over there keeps looking and looking at you. In case you're interested."

"Does she?" Eden glanced towards the blonde, who was sitting with a thick-set man, also blond.

At this distance she looked exceptionally pretty; Marjorie had not noticed her before on the ship. She smiled at Eden, fluttering her fingers in a small gesture of greeting. He made a small bow, then turned away, wrinkling his forehead; the scar puckered deep. When his face was in repose Marjorie hardly noticed it. She said, "You know her?"

"Slightly. I met her on the Champlain a few months ago coming home."

"She's stunning."

"She's a model. German."

"Do you go into Germany much?"

"Most of my business is there."

"Then you're not Jewish."

With a cold smile he shook his head. "It wouldn't be very pleasant for me if I were, I guess."

"What's it like in Germany now?" Marjorie said after a silence.

"Not good."

"Have you ever seen — well, any of the things we read about?"

"I haven't been inside a concentration camp, if that's what you mean. I've seen storm troopers wreck a restaurant. They're like football players after a game, having a little gay horseplay. It's sort of comical to watch, really. They're laughing and joking. It's a little creepy to see a policeman go by looking the other way, that's all. Makes it seem like a dream."

"Do you think there'll be a war?"

Eden smoked for a while, looking at her. "Well, I'll tell you, Marjorie. They've built these long six-lane highways everywhere in Germany. Broad white rivers of concrete, absolutely empty, not a car on them, stretching to the horizon. What are those roads for?"

Marjorie was sorry she had started the topic. She was uncomfortable under Eden's direct gaze.

For years now she had been afraid even to think about Germany. Sometimes in her restless nights she had had nightmares of being pursued through Berlin by storm troopers. But it had never seemed quite real to her that somewhere on the face of the solid green earth human beings were doing to other human beings what the papers said the Nazis were doing to the Jews. She hoped that in the end the atrocities would turn out to be mostly newspaper talk.

She said, "You know, I'm ashamed of myself. You're giving me the horrors, and all I want to do about it is change the subject."

"That's all anybody is doing about it, Marjorie."

"I'm Jewish. I should care a little more."

"Jews are just people."

She said, pausing for a moment to scrutinize his calm face, "That's the best compliment anyone can pay us. Said in that tone, anyway."

"I'm not so sure. I'm not particularly sold on people at the moment. I think, given the choice, I'd rather be a cat or a bear."

"You remind me a lot — every now and then, the way you talk — of a man I know."

"Really? A good man or a bad one?"

"Well, some think he's a monster. He's the one I'm crossing the ocean for."

"Maybe it would be best if you didn't catch him."

"Oh, is your wife a thoroughly miserable woman?"

"I'm not married. I was." He puffed at his cigar. "My wife is dead."

"I'm sorry."

"It happened several years ago. Auto accident. That's how I got my scar. I went through the windshield. My wife was killed." He said this rapidly and dryly, as though to cut off further discussion; drank up his drink and signalled for another. "You don't have to keep pace with me, by the way, I have an unusual tolerance for booze... Isn't that Jackie May dancing?"

Marjorie looked at the dance floor. "So it is, by gosh. An honest-to-goodness celebrity after all. My trip is made." Jackie May had been the nation's favorite radio comedian when Marjorie was still fifteen, and he was still popular. He was a pudgy man, absolutely bald, with wagging eyebrows and flapping hands. He was dancing with a very pretty brunette girl about Marjorie's age, half a head taller than himself.

"That's his new wife, I believe," Eden said. "He's on his honeymoon, or so I seem to remember reading in *Winchell*."

"Why, he looks past sixty," Marjorie said. "Is he really married to that girl? How revolting!"

"There are many theories as to why old men marry young pretty girls," Eden said. "Regressive tendencies, or a post-adolescent emotional fixation, something like that. The girl is a surrogate, a symbol, not a real person to the man, all the books say so. I have my own theory about it, though. If I had the time and the talent I'd write a book. I'm sure I'm right."

"What's your theory?"

"Well, I say old men marry young pretty girls to sleep with them." He said it with a straight, even down face, looking at the dance floor.

Marjorie said, after a while: "Do you spend your spare time reading books on regressions and fixations?"

"I used to teach psychology," Eden said, with the same straight face.

"I see."

"And now you're in the chemical business."

"That's right."

"And is any of this true, or are you taking some queer pleasure in filling me full of stories?"

"It's true, all right. I gave up teaching after my accident. I wasn't much good at it afterwards."

Marjorie took a less satiric tone. "You seem very strange to me. I'm not being especially stupid, am I?"

"You're not being stupid at all, Marjorie, but I believe I am. I'm sorry." He drank whisky. "I guess I've been taking a sort of childish pleasure in mystifying you. I can't say why. The booze, maybe, though I don't think so. I've had a sort of shock today, nothing serious, but my nerves haven't been very good lately. Everything I've told you is true, all the same, or true enough, anyway. Have you ever told the exact truth in your life? It's an extremely hard thing to do. Every encyclopaedia is full of lies." He looked at her, and there seemed to be a faint tinge of appeal in his eyes, curiously contrasted with the dry tone and the mocking words. "Have I scared you off, or would you like to dance some more?"

Marjorie said, "Of course I'll dance, if you like. But I think possibly it's a bore for you to keep up a conversation with me. I won't mind at all if you'd rather go back to your room and read, or go to sleep."

"Certainly not," Eden said. "Let's dance, by all means. Let's dance till Everyman's fiddle drops from his hands. I'm having a wonderful time. I hope you are."

When Marjorie opened her eyes next morning, white sunlight was coming in a slant shaft through the porthole. The ship was rolling much more than yesterday; she saw through the porthole clear blue sky, then rough purple water rushing by, then blue sky again. She lay on her pillow, blinking at the strong light, thinking of Mike Eden. She passed a lazy few

minutes remembering some of the strange things he had said; then it occurred to her to be surprised at having him on her mind, and not Noel. Thinking of Noel Airman when she woke was a chronic ailment of hers, as some people woke with raw throats. It was very agreeable to be free of it even for a day.

She rang for coffee. The steward brought it with a copy of the ship's newspaper, and told her that the clocks had been moved forward an hour; it was almost lunchtime. This gave her an excuse to surrender to laziness for another hour or so. She piled the pillows and sat up drinking coffee and reading the paper.

She yawned through the news stories—Hitler was occupying Czechoslovakia unresisted—and turned to the calendar of ship's events. There was going to be a ping-pong tournament in the afternoon, a Marx Brothers movie in the evening, and a dance in the main lounge. She decided to wear her best evening dress that night, a fetching black taffeta from Bergdorf, instead of saving it for the captain's dinner.

She found herself, after a while, a bit dizzy and uneasy from the rolling of the ship. She bathed, clinging with a soapy hand to the rail over the tub, and giggling at the wild back-and-forth slosh of the steaming water. She dressed in a hurry, humming "Falling In Love With Love," and went out on deck.

Sun-glare smote her eyes, and she put on dark glasses. Marvelling again at the vastness of the ship, she fell into the parade of morning marchers, gulping the sweet cool air. She rounded the far end of the port side, and came upon Eden at a ping-pong table, negligently clicking balls back and forth with an intent boy. "Hi, athlete," she said.

He waved the bat at her. "Hi. Lunch?"

"Love it."

He seemed very cheerful; he said he had been up since eight, walking the decks. They went to his table in the great ornate dining-room; he depressed the steward by setting the long menu aside and ordering a lettuce-and-tomato sandwich.

They chatted easily as they ate. She found out that he had studied in Vienna and knew Freud.

"You knew Freud?" She stared at him.

"Well, very slightly. You almost had to, fifteen years ago when I was taking my Ph.D., if you wanted to write anything in the analysis field. What's so amazing about all this? You look as though you didn't believe a word of it."

"I don't know. It's like saying you used to hob-nob with Darwin, or Copernicus."

Eden smiled. "He was a genius, all right. But he wasn't a Darwin or a Copernicus, you're wrong there. Nobody can really build on him, and that's what makes the true landmark scientist."

Towards the end of the meal Marjorie said, "The blonde's looking at you again. She makes me self-conscious."

"I wish she'd fall overboard," Eden said.

"Don't be absurd."

"Did you see the paper this morning? Czechoslovakia's gone. It seems to me that if I were a German it would give me the greatest conceivable pleasure to cut my own throat... I'm sorry you told me about Hilda. I can feel her eyes, crawling on my neck like a spider. Let's get out of here."

They went back to the promenade deck for the ping-pong tournament, in which he was enrolled. There were only half a dozen other entries for the men's cup. "It'll all be over in an hour or so," Eden said. "Stick around and cheer for me." He beat his first opponent easily, playing a steady defensive game. Then he stood by Marjorie and watched the next match, which was won by a young German named Thaler. Marjorie recognised him as the man who had sat in the night-club with the blond girl, Hilda.

At the last point the German turned to Mike, saluted with his racket, and bowed. "Mr. Eden, at your service." He had long, straight, blond hair and very broad shoulders. Eden began taking off his coat and tie, and the German grinned. "Not necessary, Mr. Eden. You are my master with ease."

Eden lost the first game, making wild slams and faulty services. The German, profiting by all his mistakes, coolly and methodically piled up points. Hilda came in, half-way through the game, and leaned against the rail beside Marjorie. She applauded all Eden's good shots, and when he lost the game she said to Marjorie, "He won the cup on the Champlain. He warms up soon." Marjorie didn't answer.

Eden played much better in the second game. Hilda said to Marjorie, "He does well. Dance, talk, play ping-pong—All-American boy, no? You're old friends?"

Marjorie nodded slightly. She felt awkward and stiff and quite unable to talk to the German girl.

"So he tells me. Nice to meet an old friend on the boat. You're lucky. He is a sympathetic person. Very cultured. To me he is like a typical Englishman. I lived in London three years. If I would see him in Piccadilly I would never guess he was American let alone Jewish; you know—Good shot, Mike."

The word made all the nerves in Marjorie's body contract. She calculated a slight pause, and then said, "I beg your pardon?"

"Hm?" said the blonde girl.

"Did you say Mike Eden was Jewish?"

The blonde girl's smile was affable. "You're an old friend of his, surely you know that? Please don't think because I'm German I care. We're not all exactly like that."

Marjorie had a strange and utterly irresistible impulse. She said, shaking her head, "Well, I'm just wondering how you got that impression. I happen to know he isn't. We lived in the same neighborhood years ago. I lived across the street from the church his family went to."

"To church? His family went to church, you say?" There was a burst of applause which the two girls ignored. They were looking each other straight in

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IRON-ON TRANSFERS



IRON-ON transfer designs provide a quick, pretty way to decorate your lingerie or children's clothing. They are also useful for those who are making attractive, individual Christmas presents.

Iron-on transfer No. 1008C (above) features a dainty design of hearts with the words "I love you" and tiny flowers on them.

It takes only a few moments before you have this pretty pattern transferred on to your lingerie. The pattern is merely pressed on with a warm iron. Price 2/6.

Illustrated at right is a pattern for a little girl's nightie with lace-trimmed yoke and puffed sleeves. The pattern is in sizes to fit girls of 2, 4, 6, and 8 years. Price 2/-.

The transfer and pattern can be obtained from our Needlework Department. See address page 53.



the face. The ping-pong ball clicked and clicked. The blonde's eyes wavered. "Aren't you mistaken?"

Marjorie shook her head.

The blonde glanced at Eden and then at Marjorie. "I feel very ridiculous. He never said so, I just assumed it—you see, he was so terribly sympathetic. My father had a very bad time with the Nazis, and—oh, I make a fool of myself sometimes. . . . Ach, look at that shot!" Eden had lured Thaler to one side of the table and slammed the ball in the other corner. Everybody clapped, and the German rapped the table with his racket. He was smiling at Eden; his eyes were reddened and determined. He won the second game by a closer score. Eden won the third game.

The contest was best three out of five. Both men were perspiring. Eden's face was dead grey, his scar purple-red. The spectators were not applauding any more, but watching in a hush. Once, running for a shot, Thaler tripped and fell on his face. A burst of scattered, uneasy laughter did not lighten the tension. Thaler got up laughing, too, his face dark red. Eden won the game playing with murderous vigor.

The last game was a rout. Marjorie fell uneasily silent, watching with the German girl. Thaler stopped trying, popped up the ball, and made jokes about Eden's prowess. Eden unsmilingly crashed ball after ball past him. The German said, when the score was 17-3, "I think I concede to Mister Babe Ruth." Eden shook his head and served the ball whizzing past Thaler, who made a comic motion with his racket.

When it was over there was no applause. The German put on his coat, nodded and smiled at Eden, and walked out. Eden played the final round with the thirteen-year-old boy who had volleyed with him in the morning. All the sting went out of his game; the boy was an excellent player, and beat him in straight sets. Hilda left halfway through the match, as did most of the spectators.

Marjorie took Eden's arm as they walked down the deck. His shirt was soaked and he was trembling. "You'd better have a shower."

Eden nodded. She walked to his stateroom with him. He said nothing all the way. When they were inside he threw his coat across the room and sank in an armchair. "I'm disgusted with myself. The Nazis conquered, America triumphant, civilisation saved. On the ping-pong table."

"Don't get so wrought up," Marjorie said. "You're warped on the subject."

"I'm not warped on the subject at all. I'm insane on it," Eden said, jerking a cigar out of a drawer and slamming the drawer. He lit the cigar with shaking fingers.

Marjorie told him about the conversation with the blonde girl. His face drawn, he stared at her, smoking, not moving. "Whatever possessed you," he said, "to tell such a ridiculous lie?"

"I really can't imagine," Marjorie said. "I just couldn't help myself. Somehow I wanted to confuse her as much as possible. She was obviously pumping me."

"Well, that doesn't mean anything, it's a characteristic of theirs. They'll ask you about anything."

"I'm sorry, if I did anything wrong. It certainly was a silly lie."

He got out of his chair and came towards her. She didn't know what he was going to do. He bent and kissed her mouth lightly. "You didn't do badly at all." He went to a shelf, took down a bottle of white capsules, poured water from a jug, and swallowed two capsules.

"One of the privileges of

Continuing . . .

Marjorie Morningstar

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being in the chemical business," he said, replacing the bottle. "Drugs are part of the game. All the happiness pills you can use. Let me know if you get nervous or depressed about anything. I am Old Doctor Happiness." He started to take off his shirt. "Don't worry about Hilda. Put her out of your mind."

"What's it all about, Mike?"

"Why, nothing at all. She's just a snoopy Teuton, and there are some eighty millions of them, I regret to say. Run along. I'm going to take my shower and sleep. I didn't sleep much last night. See you at dinner."

It was during a storm after dinner that Marjorie, on impulse, decided to show Noel's letter to Mike.

She had been feeling squeamish and he came to her cabin and gave her a pill from his varied stock.

He began reading the worn dog-eared pages, laying them carefully one by one on his lap face down. She sat in another armchair, watching his face, and thinking that this was a romantic moment indeed: a gorgeous bedroom; a handsome stranger in dinner clothes, herself as pretty as she knew how to be in a black dress which disclosed all she decently could of her shoulders and bosom; two broad inviting beds. And yet, she thought, sex was as far from this room as from a hospital ward.

Mike Eden's eyebrows shot up, and he looked at her. He resumed reading, his lips curling a bit.

"Stop right there," she said.

"What part are you reading?"

He took a slow puff at his cigar. "If your encounter with that monster Noel Airman is to have any enduring value—Is that the name of the man you're pursuing to Paris? Noel Airman?"

"Yes. It's rather a queer name—actually it's a pseudonym."

"Tall, blond, long jaw, great talker?"

"Yes?"

"I know Noel." She stared at him. "Don't be so surprised, Margerie. Half the Americans in Europe do."

"You know Noel?"

"Noel gets around. When you meet him you don't forget him."

"I'm aware of that," Marjorie said, laughing uneasily, still staring.

He dropped the letter in his lap. "Shall I go on reading?"

"As you please. . . . Well! You've really knocked my breath out."

Eden regarded her, puffing his cigar. "You and Noel Airman, eh? Interesting?"

"You don't approve?"

"Battle of the century, I'd say."

"It's just about turned into that. So long as I win, that's all right too. Where on earth did you meet Noel?"

"Last year in Florence."

"Did you get to know him well?"

"About as well as most people do. That is to say, he owes me a couple of hundred dollars."

She blushed and looked down at her lap. "That's his worst trait."

"Oh, mind you, Noel means to pay it back. Maybe he will, one of these years. It's not important. Noel's great company. We hired a car and went tooling around the Italian Alps with two other fellows, a painter and a Rhodes scholar on vacation. I paid Noel's share while he kept waiting for a cheque from America to catch up with him. It never quite did."

"Where is he now, do you know?"

"I can find out easily enough."

"You'll do me a great favor if you will."

"Marjorie, are you crossing the Atlantic after a fellow without knowing where he is?"

"Well, I was sure I could locate him."

He shook his head slowly, and went back to reading the letter. After a few moments he said, "I don't know. Now I somehow feel as though I'm prying."

"Oh, go ahead. Finish it. What difference does it make? Care for whisky and water without ice?"

"Ring for the steward. He'll bring ice."

"Not with you in here. . . . All right, grin. I'm a prude. Noel's said so for years. You'll take it without ice or not at all."

"Without ice, please, by all means."

She opened a bottle of twelve-year-old Scotch from Marjorie's gift basket. He accepted the whisky and water absently, drained the glass, and went on reading. "This is quite a letter," he murmured.

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"I think so. That's what I'm going to Paris to find out, once for all."

"Are you sure that's the reason you're going to Paris?"

"What do you mean? Don't be enigmatic, you're not psycho-analysing me."

"Noel can, don't you worry. He makes plenty of money whenever he puts his mind to it. All he needs is to steady down."

"And you're the one to steady him."

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She said, "I just can't see you and Noel together. I don't know why. You seem to be out of different centuries."

"I'm a shipboard acquaintance. I'm not real. I'll vanish when the anchor goes down, like a ghost at cock crow."

"That sounds like Noel. But then you often do. It's rather uncanny. I suppose that's what has me tagging after you."

"Well, I'll take that as a compliment. Noel's a great talker." He tapped the letter on his lap. "Also quite a letter-writer. If he could write like that for pay he'd make a living. But most good letter-writers can't."

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simply sat there in Reno. She had an absolutely unbelievable capacity for doing nothing and hoping dumbly for the best." His voice was becoming hoarse and shaky.

"Well, this can either take two days or two minutes. In two minutes, I was driving with Emily along a highway late at night. This was shortly after she'd returned from Reno. We'd had some frightful quarrels, and then a miserable half-reconciliation. I fell asleep at the wheel. We smashed into a railroad overpass. My skull was fractured and Emily was killed instantly. Her neck was broken."

He looked at Marjorie in a peculiarly embarrassed way, with a half-apologetic smile. No words came to her dry lips and dry throat. After a while he went on. "There was quite a bit of trouble with the police, of course. It takes a lot of red tape even to die accidentally. But what with me nearly dead myself, and no insurance money, and no other woman—this other girl had married long ago—the books were soon closed. It was an accident, and that was that, for the record."

"But not for me. For me it was only the beginning. From a Freudian viewpoint there are no accidents, you see. Or, rather, accidents, mistakes, oversights, slips of the tongue, are icebergs poking above the water and showing colossal masses of motivation underneath. I fell asleep at the wheel, sure I did. But falling asleep is something the unconscious mind can bring about. From the analytic point of view—in which I then believed, with religious intensity—there isn't the slightest doubt that I murdered my wife, getting rid of an intolerable burden in the only sure way I could, and revenging myself for years of misery and a crippled life."

Eden's face had gone quite ashy, though his expression was calm and even unpleasantly humorous. He walked to the whisky and poured his glass half full.

"Well, I went through agonies I won't bore you with, but the end of it all was a terrific nerve crisis, out of which I emerged unable to teach. I gave up psychology, and I've never gone back to it. It's seven years since I've glanced into a professional journal, let alone a book in the field. In fact I have a kind of horror of the subject. I got interested in making money. Making money is fun, you know, and very absorbing. I'm good at it. I started out by getting a job, and eventually went into business for myself. I play a lot of cards, and read a lot of books, and that brings you up to date."

There was a marked contrast between these casual last words and the low, strained tone in which Eden said them. He was standing by the port-hole, holding on to one of the metal dogs, and as the ship rolled, black water crashed against the glass and purple lightning showed in the turbulent sky. The scar across his white forehead looked like another streak of lightning. Marjorie, greatly disturbed, said, to break the silence:

"It seems like a terrible waste. You must have been an excellent teacher."

"I was. Freud had been my ruling passion for about fifteen years. What an awful emptiness it left behind—and this on top of the loss of Emily! Believe me, having a sudden, silent vacuum of death in my life, instead of a problem, was shock enough. Giving up teaching really did me in. For two years I was so close to suicide that—and I swear this to you—I didn't do it simply because I didn't want to give strangers the trouble of cleaning up a mess that used to be me." He gave that embarrassed half apolo-

getic smile again, then shrugged.

"Well, I guess I pulled out of this schizoid state, which was what it was, because I was meant to live, and not die. I don't know what else did it. And I emerged with this jeering attitude about analysis. It's second nature by now. Once you lose faith in all that, believe me, you really lose it."

"All right, that's my little story, Marjorie." He picked up Noel's letter, and flourished the pages at her. "Our friend Mr. Noel Airman really touched off this outburst, if you want to know. Noel's quite an iconoclast, isn't he? Probably impressed you deeply. Rightly so. He's a wonderful talker. Still, Noel is very much a creature of his time, so he takes the current myths for solid facts." He tossed the letter at Marjorie's feet in an openly contemptuous gesture.

"The one thing in all those twenty pages that Noel takes seriously is the analytic explanation of his own conduct. He's proud of it. He's as orthodox as your own father, Marjorie, in his fashion, but he doesn't know it. How well I know the type! Sweeping the dust of orthodoxy out the front door, and never seeing it drift in again at the back door, setting down in somewhat different patterns. The vilest insult you can hurl at them is to tell them they believe in something. Yet all Noel Airman really is, Margie, is a displaced clergyman. You have no idea, till you've read the literature of neurosis, how full the woods are of these displaced creatures. Brave sceptics all, making a life's work out of being doctrinaire, clever, supercilious—and inwardly totally confused and wretched."

Marjorie said, startled, "Noel once talked about becoming a rabbi. He wasn't serious, really. But he worked himself up terrifically over it."

Mike Eden grinned. "It's just as well Noel didn't become a rabbi. It would have been hard on the husbands in the congregation." He walked to the whisky bottle, picked it up, then set it down again without pouring. "I believe I have half emptied this bottle in less than an hour. Also more than half emptied my brain. I feel remarkably good. I feel like the Ancient Mariner after spinning his yarn for the Wedding Guest." He came and stood beside her. "I'm thirty-nine. How old are you?"

"Twenty-three. Twenty-four in November," Marjorie said uneasily, looking up at him. "Why?"

"When I got out of college," Eden said, "you were five years old."

"I guess that's right," Marjorie said. "I'm not thinking clearly."

"Of course you're not. I've stupefied you with words." He took her hand. "Well, maybe I've demonstrated one thing to you that may prove useful in time. Noel Airman isn't the only man in the world who can talk. As a matter of fact, Margie, it's a completely negligible accomplishment." He pulled her to her feet, and kissed her once on the mouth, a real kiss. She leaned back in his arms, astonished, unprotesting, and more than a little stirred. She said softly, "Yes! What's this?"

Mike Eden's look was tender, shrewd, and extremely melancholy.

"Plain, self-indulgence, I guess. I've always liked blue eyes and brown hair, and girls

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ALL characters in the serials and short stories which appear in The Australian Women's Weekly are fictitious, and have no reference to any living person.

about as tall as you. Good night, Margie."

He went out, leaving her rather stunned.

"Let me have a cigarette, darling," Marjorie said it without thinking, but then the endearing word rang strange in her ears. They were sitting side by side on deck-chairs in the morning sunlight, wrapped in blankets, reading. It was the afternoon of the fourth day of the crossing.

He passed the cigarettes and matches from his lap to hers without looking up. He was reading "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft"; Marjorie had glanced at it and thought it a very dull book, but he was absorbed in it.

She liked to look at his face when he read. Lighting her cigarette, she studied him, wondering how "darling" had happened to slip out. Marjorie had been thinking a great deal about Mike Eden in the past few days. She was quite sure she wasn't in love with him. His occasional kisses were pleasant, and she liked to dance with him; his arm around her waist felt good; but the charming little uneasiness that she had always experienced, dancing with Noel, wasn't exactly there.

At the moment, sitting beside him in the paired intimacy of two deck-chairs, she felt tranquil and in health she has seldom had in recent years. All this didn't square, she realised, with the kind of desperate love that was supposed to be driving her across the Atlantic after Noel Airman; but she had heard and read enough about shipboard romances to take what was happening with several grains of salt; and she strongly suspected that the day she set foot on solid earth again, the old ache for Noel would rush through all her nerves, while Eden would fade to a forgotten shadow.

Meantime, the serene peace of the crossing, however unreal, was hers to enjoy; and she was enjoying it heartily.

"There goes the Gestapo," she murmured. He glanced up at Hilda, strolling by on the arm of the man in the green jacket. The two Germans ignored Eden and Marjorie, as they had been doing for the past couple of days. Marjorie said, "I suppose it was inevitable that those two team up."

"Pure blood calling to pure blood," Eden said with a grimace, turning back to his book. "Her ankles really are pretty bad."

"Mm," Eden said.

"Mine aren't."

Eden reluctantly took his eyes from his book and inspected the bulky outline of Marjorie's blanketed form.

"You're a captivating dish from head to toe. I can't tell you how much I envy Noel Airman. Especially since he's a thousand miles from here, and can read in peace if he wants to." He took a cigar out of a case in his pocket.

"You don't really envy him. You think he's a worthless worm, and that I'm throwing myself away on him." The fragrant cigar smoke drifted past her nose. "You know, I'll be sorry when this trip is over."

"Why? You'll rush panting into Noel's arms a few hours after we land, and life will blaze brightly for ever after."

"Don't be so superior, I'm well aware that Noel will be as much trouble as he's always been, or more. But I feel so marvellously detached from all my problems—even from Noel—here on the boat. I haven't had such a respite in years. It's doing wonders for my nerves."

"I don't think you need it." He started to read again, calmly drawing on the cigar.

Marjorie felt very little like reading, and very much like talking. She picked up a pad of writing-paper and scrawled her name on a sheet. "How

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about analysing my handwriting?"

Yawning, he put the book aside, marking his place with the flap of the jacket. "This is as bad as being married. Are you sure you want your soul to be seen into? Write a few lines. Signatures are meaningless."

She scrawled a speech from "Pygmalion." "Pretty dull handwriting," she said, "now that I look at it."

He studied the paper, puffing out his cheeks. "It's changed quite a bit."

She blinked. "How can you know that? Did Noel show you my writing?"

"No. It's a handwriting that's undergoing change, that's all."

"Uncanny." The fact was that much of the elegance she had once cultivated had dropped out of her writing in the past year or two.

For about ten minutes he was silent, staring at the page, now and then nodding. She became self-conscious. "Well, say something."

Crumpling the paper, he threw it across the deck; the wind whipped it out over the rail. "Sorry. I can't see a thing. Get your money back from the cashier."

"You dog, you can't get away with that."

He was looking at her with unusual warmth, a small smile in the corners of his mouth. "I'll tell you just two things I observed. Then I'm off to order some coffee. First, I'm afraid Noel's a pretty dirty son-and-so, after all. Second, your handwriting is almost exactly like Anita's."

"Anita?"

"The girl I didn't marry."

She said nothing. A minute or so passed, then he said, "I'm sorry, Marjorie."

"Sorry for what?" "I should have sworn off that handwriting business years ago. I always come out with something stupid. I shouldn't have said that about Noel."

She smiled at him with a trace of indulgence. "Why that's exactly what he is. The bad part is that I've always liked that about him, as well as everything else. Now if you'll concentrate your vast brain and write a book explaining why girls are drawn to men like that, you'll really do humanity a service. You'll be another Freud."

He laughed, but his forehead knotted, the lines of concentration pulling in towards the centre. "It's a good question. Let's see . . . One thing is obvious. This man, considered as a type, has vitality. He's a dasher, a smasher, a leaper. There's promise in him. When you go to buy a puppy, you know, you're not supposed to take the sweet one that licks your hand. You're supposed to pick the most rambunctious rascal of the litter. He'll make the best dog. A woman looking for a husband is in a sense getting herself a domestic animal, so it would follow that—"

Marjorie burst out laughing.

Eden said, "I'm quite serious. She feels something missing in a guy who's housebroken already. Instinct tells her that a dirty son-and-so will tame down into a guy worth having, a hubby with a little zing to him, and the vital energy to pull a heavy load a long way."

"I wonder if you were one in your day," Marjorie said. "I rather think so."

"In my day? I'm one of the congenital, unchangeable ones."

"No, you aren't."

"Don't be fooled by my company manners, Marjorie. Of course it's not my 'fault' as we used to say in Psychology I. I had rather bad nerves to start with, and they're much the worse for wear. However, what with happiness pills and

the general calming effect of a ship, and your balmy influence, I think I've been pretty nice so far. With luck I may keep it up till we leave the ship, and then you'll always remember me pleasantly. That's something to work for."

"Why?"

She was peering at his face, but the twilight was so dim that she could scarcely make out the features. He said, "Why, I'd enjoy believing there's someone who thinks well of me. That's all."

At that moment a long string of yellow lights came on overhead and broke the gloom. They were alone on the chilly glassed-in deck, except for one white-headed lady asleep far down the line of vacant deck-chairs. Eden's profile looked peculiarly familiar to Marjorie, as though she had known him in the Bronx in her childhood.

She said, after hesitating over the words for several seconds, "Mike, you're Jewish, aren't you?"

His head turned slowly, and



the dark stony look of his face scared her. Then, as though at the flick of a switch, light and warmth flowed into his expression. "When did you decide that?"

"I don't know. Maybe during the ping-pong game. I've felt it, rather than decided it, for several days."

"Well, I don't mind your thinking so. Just don't go around saying so, please. It could prove a nuisance for me."

"I won't. Are you really in the chemical business?"

"Marjorie, shipboard acquaintances always shade the truth about themselves a bit, for one reason or another. I haven't shaded it to any unusual extent. And now let's get a long running start of martinis on the evening, shall we?" He threw aside his blanket and abruptly got out of the deck-chair, extending his hand to her.

He played cards that evening, while Marjorie watched the movie. She then danced with a sheepish boy of twenty travelling with his mother, who had been mooning at her all the voyage, but had never worked up the courage to approach her. It occurred to her that at this boy's age George Drobbs had been a towering adult to her. Twenty, in a man, now was clumsy adolescence.

Eden gathered her up at midnight, and they went to the Verandah Grill. He was in remarkably high spirits; they danced, and then walked the decks talking, until three.

The next day was edged with gold. The sea was deep

blue, the sunlight made sharp shadows on the decks, a breeze blew from the south-west smelling like flowers, and land birds cried and darted around the ship. Everything they did was amusing and pleasant—deck tennis, lunching picnic-style on the sun deck in the sunshine, swimming in the ship's magnificent tiled indoor pool, listening to Mozart quartets in the salon at tea time—the day seemed to go on and on, bright and clear and slow.

When the sun set at last in a holocaust of scarlet clouds, spilling red gold on the purpling sea from horizon to horizon, Marjorie, standing at the rail beside Eden, felt close to tears—not because the day was over but because the last moments were as perfect as the rest. She said to Eden, "Why isn't it always like this? For everyone?"

He put his arm around her shoulders. "It's a nice sunset, but don't get carried away. The whole world can't go riding around on ships." He glanced at his watch. "Time to dress for dinner."



There was a festive gold-lettered menu for the captain's dinner, and the tables were full of fresh flowers. Eden, as he mostly did, ordered a vegetable salad, while Marjorie ate a sumptuous dinner.

Later in the bar she said, "Well, I guess you make up for it with liquor." He was downing a fourth double brandy, showing as usual no effect besides a slightly warmer tone when he talked.

She drank quite a bit herself, but she didn't remember much about the dancing except that it was heavenly. Around one o'clock in the morning they were on the boat deck, under a high blue-white moon which rocked slowly from one side of the colossal funnels to the other. The flower-scent of the cold breeze had become stronger. There was a number of shadowy couples frankly necking here and there.

"Will you look at all the smoochers?" Marjorie said. "We're a pair of old fuddys."

"I don't know. I think there's something hugely comical about all these double shadows," Eden said. "Blob after blob after blob. Each double blob quite sure that they're doing something they really want to do. When they're all being shoved by body chemicals through a mindless mechanical process. Don't you agree it's funny?"

"Not at all," Marjorie said. "In fact, at the moment you sound a little like a sophomore at a dance without a date."

Eden burst into such a roar

of laughter that several of the double shadows near them divided and straightened up. "If I were ten years younger and in any kind of mental shape," he said, "I would give Noel Airman a run for his money. Let's stay up till dawn and get all red-eyed and pallid and stewed, shall we?"

"Sure," Marjorie said.

"Aren't the bars all closed?"

"Step this way."

Hilda, the blonde, and Thaler were coming up the stairway to the boat deck as they came down. Eden stepped aside to let the two Germans pass in silence. It was an awkward moment. At the door of his cabin Eden hesitated, reaching in his pocket for the key, and looked thoughtful.

"I have a sudden positive memory that I didn't lock this door." He turned the knob and the door opened. His glance at her was sharp and worried. "I always have had a suicidal absent-mindedness. No doubt all the crown jewels are missing. Well, come in."

He looked around the room restlessly, but it was all in order: the bed turned down, a single pink reading-lamp lit at his bedside. "How do you like brandy and tap water?"

"My favorite drink."

He snapped on his short-wave portable radio. After a moment of humming the loud-speaker came to life with the shouting of a harsh, strong, hysterical voice in German. Mike turned the sound down. The voice, barking and screaming, was interrupted by frightening crowd roars. Marjorie

said, "What's that?"

"What do you think?"

"Hitler?"

"Hitler."

"Two o'clock in the morning?"

"It's a record."

Marjorie regarded the radio with wide eyes, listening to the voice. She couldn't quite believe she was hearing it. "Turn it off."

"Gladly."

He kept looking around the room as he mixed the drinks. He went to the shelf of books over by the desk and stared at them; opened the desk drawers one by one, and leafed through papers and folders. The lines of his face became sharp and deep. "Marjorie, I'm pretty tired, after all. Let's call it a night, shall we?"

"Throwing me out? Can't I finish my drink?"

"Take it with you. Take the bottle."

"Catch me walking through the ship with a bottle of brandy! No thanks—"

He slammed the drawer shut so hard that books piled on the desk tumbled to the deck, spilling little papers from among their leaves. The papers rolled on the deck, curling like shavings. A stream of bitter obscenity burst from his lips as he scooped at books and papers with both hands, dropping to his knees.

Marjorie put down her drink and stood, shocked and terrified, staring at him. In a few moments he sat in the chair again, the books and papers helter-skelter in his lap, and returned her stare. His face had a greenish cast, his eyes were white-rimmed, his scar looked like a fresh purple gash. She came to him hesitantly, and touched his face. "Mike, what's the matter?"

He stood and, one after another, hurled the books across the room at the door. He flung himself on the bed face down, burying his face in the pillow. Marjorie realised in amazement that she was hearing stifled screams. His body writhed. She had to suppress a wild impulse to laugh; the sight was as ridiculous as it was dreadful. She thought of fleeing from the room, but she couldn't.

"Mike! Mike!" He did not

answer, but in a minute or so he became still. He rolled over and sat up then, his eyes glassy. He staggered to the bathroom, and she saw him take a hypodermic needle from a black case before he convulsively kicked shut the door.

She threw the brandy and water into an empty pitcher, poured straight brandy, and gulped it. Sinking into an armchair she lit a cigarette and waited, her body racked by an occasional shiver.

It seemed a long time before he came out, though the cigarette was only half-smoked. He looked better, but still fearfully pale. He was in his shirt sleeves, and he had taken off the black tie and stiff collar, so that he looked half undressed. He shook his head at her and smiled wretchedly. From the shelf of medicines near the bed he took down a bottle of dark brown capsules. He peered at her face for several seconds, holding the bottle in a wavering hand.

"Well, I was meaning to talk to you anyway." He took two capsules, slipping into a maroon dressing-gown that lay on the bed, lit a cigar, poured brandy for himself, and settled in a chair opposite her. In that small space of time he recovered astonishingly. Color returned to his face; the hand that held the cigar was steady, and the fingers of the other hand lay relaxed on the arm of the chair, not drumming, and not trembling in the least.

He said, "I've probably shocked you out of a year's growth," and his tone was pleasant and even.

"I'm a little concerned for you," Marjorie said. "I can't help that, I'm afraid—"

"I'm not a drug addict, Marjorie. I've learned to live with a pretty unstable nervous system, that's all."

Then quite calmly, he began to talk about drug plants and their properties, his voice going on and on until Marjorie began to feel drowsy.

What happened next she was never quite sure; when she opened her eyes the porthole showed bluish-grey, and she was lying on a bed, still in her evening dress, covered by her camel's hair coat and by a light quilt. Eden sat in an armchair beside her, reading by lamplight, freshly shaved, and dressed in the grey tweed suit he had worn on the first day of the voyage.

She sat up, exclaiming, Eden told her she had staggered to the bed, muttering that she would be more comfortable lying down, and had fallen asleep in thirty seconds.

"I hadn't the heart to wake you; it was only a couple of hours to dawn, anyway. We ought to be able to see land now. How about coming topside?"

She said sullenly, blinking and yawning, "I don't know which is more thoroughly ruined—my dress or my reputation. How could you let me stay here? You're a cad, that's what!"

But she accepted a fresh toothbrush from him, washed her face, and put herself to rights. They went up on the boat deck, and she noted with relief that there were several weary-looking couples still in evening dress here and there on the ship.

Tired and sleepy as she was, the first glimpse of the faint, greenish hump on the horizon dead ahead of the ship sent a wave of pleasure and wonder through her. She caught at Eden's arm, "That's it?"

"That's it," he said. "The Old World. You're looking at France. Over the horizon is Paris and the Eiffel Tower, and, of course, Noel Airman."

To be concluded

Printed by Compressa Printaria Limited for the Publisher, Consolidated Press Limited, 168-174 Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

DEBBIE MAKES MINCE PIES

● Debbie, our teenage chef, makes delicious mince pies for New Year festivities, and shows how to serve them with a traditional touch of tartan.

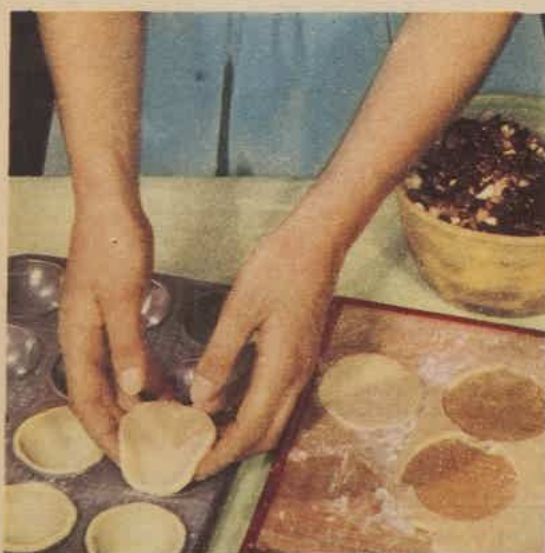


PEEL 1 small pineapple, slice, and stand aside until $\frac{1}{2}$ cup juice can be drained off. Chop finely and mix with $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. each currants, chopped raisins, and sultanas; add $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. finely minced suet, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon each nutmeg and spice.



CUT 2 peeled and cored apples into dice and mix with the fruit. Add a pinch salt and 6oz. shredded peel. Combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pineapple juice and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar, bring slowly to the boil, simmer 3 or 4 minutes.

MEASURE 4 or 5 tablespoons brandy and add to the fruit mixture with the cooled pineapple syrup. Prepare the rind and juice of 1 medium lemon and stir into the fruit. Bottle, store in cool place.



MAKE a quantity of plain pastry, roll out thinly. Cut half the pastry into circles large enough to press into patty-tins, and line tins as illustrated above. Cut an equal number of smaller circles for the tops. Do not grease tins.



FILL each pastry-lined patty-tin with a spoonful of the fruit mince. Brush edges of pastry with milk or water. Mince may be used 24 hours after mixing, but it is best made two weeks ahead and stored in a cool place.



PLACE pastry-tops on, press lightly into position with tip of a teaspoon. Cut a slit in top of each. Brush tops with water, bake in a hot oven 15 to 20 minutes. Lift on to cake-cooler. When cold, dust lightly with icing sugar.

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and so easy to manage . . .



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Florvita, truly, is a flower's best friend

Prize recipe

Chicken and olive loaf wins this week's
recipe prize of £5 in our popular contest.

A SMALL quantity of poultry from Christmas or New Year dinner will go further if it is made into a jellied salad loaf.

Diced cold veal or pork or ham may be used to add to the chicken.

All spoon measurements are level.

CHICKEN AND OLIVE LOAF

Two tablespoons gelatine, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water, 3 cups chicken stock, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1-3rd cup sliced stuffed olives, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced ham, 1-3rd cup cooked green peas, 1-3rd cup shredded almonds, 1 cup diced celery, 2 cups diced cooked chicken.

Soften gelatine in cold water and dissolve in hot

stock. Add salt and lemon juice. Chill until just beginning to thicken. Fold in olives, ham, peas, almonds, celery, and chicken, pour into loaf-tin, and chill until firm. Unmould and serve on a bed of lettuce. Garnish with other salad ingredients. Serve mayonnaise separately.

First prize of £5 to Mrs. C. Boorman, 33 Hawthorn St., New Farm, Brisbane.

Good home-tested recipes, containing readily available foodstuffs, are eligible for this competition.

Write or type recipes on one side of the paper only, list ingredients in the order needed, use level spoon measurements.

Address to Recipe Contest, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.



TURKEY LEGS are delicious served cold with generous slices of seasoning, hot vegetables, and jellied cranberry sauce. The legs are carved from the roast bird.

FAMILY DISH

AN appetising fish pie, with a crusty breadcrumb topping, is this week's family dish. It costs 4/9 and serves four.

FISH PIE WITH CRUSTY TOPPING

Two cups cooked flaked fish (about 1lb. smoked or fresh), $\frac{1}{4}$ cups medium-thickness white sauce, 2 tablespoons chopped cooked celery, 2 or 3 dessertspoons chopped parboiled red pepper (optional), 1 hard-boiled egg, good squeeze lemon juice, salt and cayenne pepper to taste, $\frac{1}{4}$ cups soft breadcrumbs, 1 egg-yolk, 1 dessertspoon butter or substitute.

Remove bones and any skin from cooked flaked fish, add to white sauce with celery, red pepper, chopped hard-boiled egg, and lemon juice. Fold in lightly until evenly mixed, flavoring to taste with salt and cayenne. Fill into a greased ovenware dish. Moisten breadcrumbs with beaten egg-yolk, season lightly with salt and cayenne, and spread over fish mixture. Dot with butter or substitute and bake in moderate oven 25 to 30 minutes. Serve hot, garnished with parsley sprigs and lemon wedges.

Tony's luxury dish

Cote de Veau Cleopatra

"This veal dish is delicious," says Tony, of Sydney's Colony Club.

For 6 persons you will need: Six veal cutlets, 1 cup chopped white onion, 3 tablespoons butter, 2 cups milk, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. mushrooms, 1 cup cream, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated cheese, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour, 3 egg-yolks, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brandy, pinch nutmeg, pinch cayenne pepper, salt and pepper to taste.

Cook the chopped onions slowly with the butter until golden brown and soft. Do not burn; add the flour and stir well. Pour in the milk, season with salt, pepper, cayenne, and nutmeg. Allow to simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove from fire and add egg-yolks; mix well. Pass through a fine sieve and keep warm.

Brown the veal on both sides with some butter in a large frying-pan. Then lower the heat and cook on a very medium flame until done; remove to a hot silver platter. Add the mushrooms to the juices in the frying-pan and allow to cook from 5 to 7 minutes. Remove the mushrooms and keep hot.

Pour the brandy into the frying-pan, stirring well. Then add the white sauce and the cream. Allow to reduce to $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the original quantity. Season to taste. Then add the mushrooms and pour the sauce on top of the veal cutlets. Sprinkle over with grated parmesan cheese and place under the grill to brown. Serve very hot. Peas or beans may be served with this dish.

Architect's diary

By Sydney Architect
W. J. McMurray

Frequent mention of plastics as the building material of the future prompted John Turner (the name is mine) to ask me what would be their likely effect on building design.

"WITH the present rate of development of this material it is likely that the method of building homes and their appearance could undergo some radical changes in the next few years," I said.

"I suppose the architect dreams about a strong, durable material that requires no maintenance," he said.

"Present trends suggest the possibility of this in the near future.

"We have already seen the successful application of plastics as wall sheeting, table-tops, floor tiles, floor covering, and furniture upholstery."

"Do you believe that they have any application on the outside of a building? Could they ultimately replace conventional materials such as brick and timber?"

"The application of plastic in a spray form could eventually lead to this.

"Many existing cheap materials which are not completely impervious to moisture

could be used externally with very good, long-lasting results if treated with a waterproof membrane of plastic."

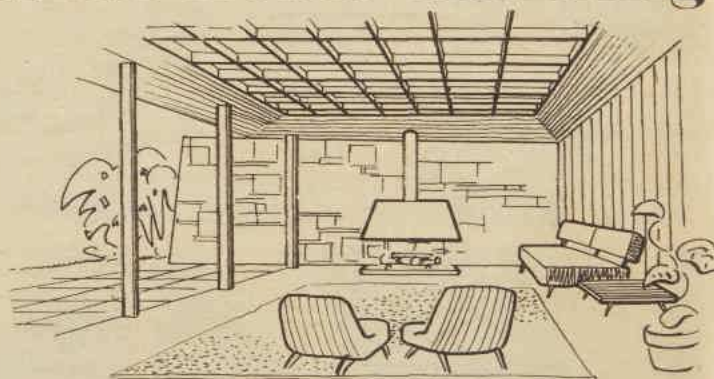
"That might suggest that if color were incorporated in this membrane continual painting would no longer be necessary," Mr. Turner said hopefully.

"That might be wishful thinking at this stage, but I believe that eventually such a plastic will be perfected," I said.

"Many good building materials which at present are spoiled to some extent by the need for cover battens at the joints would be vastly improved by the application of a waterproof plastic membrane.

"This membrane would make the joints invisible and allow expansion and contrac-

CLEAR PLASTIC PANELS in the skylight open this modern lounge-room to sun and light and give the feeling of extra space. This is one of many home-building uses of the growing number of new plastics.



tion without any unsightly cover battens."

"The same idea could apply to roofs, I suppose," said Mr. Turner.

"It would solve the problem of permanently waterproofing roofs and would make the flat roof more popular than it is at present.

"Clear plastics sprayed on to an open mesh would introduce the possibility of a completely sun-filled room. Skylights in other parts of the house in this material could become more popular."

"Furniture design, too, would be affected, wouldn't it?" asked Mr. Turner.

"Apart from furniture covering, which has already proved successful, I have heard reports of a further development in this field. Plastic sprayed directly on to a chair frame builds up into a soft, sponge-like upholstery that is very durable and comfortable."

"The application of plastic seems unlimited," said Mr. Turner. "It does look as though the house of the future could be quite different from what we accept today."

Bill McMurray

BEGINNER'S PATTERN

F3956. — Beginner's pattern for an easy-to-make matron's petticoat slip. Sizes 38 to 44in. bust. Requires 3½yds. 36in. material and 4yds. ½in. lace edging. Price 2/6.



Fashion PATTERNS

● Fashion Patterns and Needlework Notions may be obtained immediately from Fashion Patterns Pty. Ltd., 645 Harris Street, Ultimo, Sydney (postal address Box 4060, G.P.O., Sydney). Tasmanian readers should address orders to Box 66-D, G.P.O., Hobart. New Zealand readers to Box 666, G.P.O., Auckland.

F3976. — Attractively styled maternity smock-jacket. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Requires 3yds. 36in. material. Price 3/-.

F3931. — Ballerina-length evening dress has a moulded torso body line and pleated skirt. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Requires 2yds. 36in. satin and 5yds. 54in. net. Price 4/6.

F3962



F4002. — Slender-line lace-trimmed sheath dress. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Requires 3½yds. 36in. material and 2yds. embroidered lace edging. Price 3/9.

F3976



F3974



F3974. — Maternity skirt designed with comfortable waist expansion. Sizes 26 to 32in. waist. Requires 2½yds. 36in. material. Price 3/-.

NEEDLEWORK NOTIONS

● Needlework Notions are available for only six weeks after date of publication.

No. 147 — **SUNFROCK AND MATCHING BOLERO JACKET**
The whole ensemble is obtainable cut out ready to make in check gingham. The matching bolero has a chic white trim. The color choice includes red and white, blue and white, and green and white. Sizes 32 and 34in. bust 33/6; 36 and 38in. bust 34/11. Postage and registration 2/6 extra.

No. 148 — **CHILD'S SUNSUIT**
A pretty sun and play suit is obtainable cut out ready to make in floral printed cotton in pastel tonings. Sizes: 1 year 13/3, postage and registration 1/- extra; 2 years 13/9, postage and registration 1/- extra; 3 years 14/3, postage and registration 1/3 extra; 4 years 14/11, postage and registration 1/3 extra.

No. 149 — **DUCHESS SET**
Attractively designed heart-shaped duchesse set with a bird motif is obtainable cut out ready to make and clearly traced to embroider. The material and color choice includes cream and white Irish linen and sheer linen in blue, pink, lemon, and green. Price 9/11. Postage 5d. extra.

No. 150 — **CUSHION COVER**
The cushion covers are obtainable cut out ready to make with contrast appliques clearly traced ready to embroider. The applique motifs include the ace of diamonds, clubs, hearts, and spades. The material is headcloth in green, blue, pink, lemon, and natural. Size 15 x 20in. Price 12/6 each. Postage and registration 1/3 extra. Set of four 48/6. Postage and registration 3/- extra.



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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — December 28, 1955



Fashion

FROCKS

• Ready to wear or cut out ready to make.

"AMANDA." — Sleeveless, torso-line tennis dress designed with a square-cut neckline and front-buttoned fastening. The material is white pique.
Ready to Wear: Sizes 32 and 34in. bust 64/6, 36 and 38in. bust 65/11. Postage and registration 3/- extra.
Cut Out Only: Sizes 32 and 34in. bust 44/6, 36 and 38in. bust 45/11. Postage and registration 3/- extra.



"MONICA." — Prettily styled skirt in polished cotton is obtainable in blue, pink, strawberry, kelly-green, and ming-blue.

Ready to Wear: Sizes 24, 26, 28, and 30in. waist 49/11. Postage and registration 2/6 extra.
Cut Out Only: Sizes 24, 26, 28, and 30in. waist 34/6. Postage and registration 2/6 extra.

"DOLLY." — Cool, sleeveless, low-necked summer blouse in sanforised poplin. The color choice includes black, red, ming-blue, kelly-green, and grey.

Ready to Wear: Sizes 32 and 34in. bust 38/6, 36 and 38in. bust 39/11. Postage and registration 1/6 extra.

Cut Out Only: Sizes 32 and 34in. bust 24/11, 36 and 38in. bust 29/11. Postage and registration 1/6 extra.

• Note: If ordering by mail, send to address on page 53. Fashion Frocks may be inspected or obtained at Fashion Patterns Pty. Ltd., 645 Harris St., Ultimo, Sydney.



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every
night...
to keep
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Scrubbing is unpleasant — and tiresome as well. And no brush can reach around that hidden "S" bend where disease germs may lurk and breed. To be sure that your lavatory bowl is thoroughly clean at all times, use Harpic.



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For vitality, enjoy Vegemite every day. Made by Kraft.

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Crisp and Golden



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The

MASTERCRAFT

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Calendar
for 1956

To remove your Mastercraft Calendar for hanging, spread this magazine flat on a table with the Calendar open at the centre.

With a knife, carefully turn back each staple until it points upwards. Lift out the Calendar, and fold it inside out. Then punch holes where indicated, thread a piece of ribbon through both papers and tie at the back.

Your 1956 Mastercraft Calendar is now ready to hang.

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ONE EXCEPTING FEBRUARY ALONE, WHICH HAS BUT TWENTY-EIGHT DAYS CLEAR AND TWENTY-NINE IN EACH LEAP YEAR

THIRTY DAYS HATH SEPTEMBER, APRIL, JUNE AND NOVEMBER. ALL THE REST HAVE THIRTY-



1956

MASTERCRAFT



January

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April

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There was a crooked man
Who walked a crooked mile
To eat his Peanut Toffee
With a happy, crooked smile.



ASK FOR MASTERCRAFT
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IT'S WORTH IT!



1956
MASTERCRAFT
M

May

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June

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July

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August

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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26	27	28	29	30	31	..



Turn again, Dick Whittington.

Thrice Lord Mayor of London.

Hurry! Hurry! Don't be late

For your Rough Choc-o-late.



ASK FOR MASTERCRAFT
BY NAME —
IT'S WORTH IT!



1956

MASTERCRAFT



September

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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October

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
..	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	..

November

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
..	..	..	..	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	..

December

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
..	..	..	..	..	..	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	..	..	..	..	..



See-Saw, Margery Daw,

Jacky shall have a New Master,

Mastercraft Scorched Peanut Bar

Helps him work the faster.



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